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ABSTRACT

Six papers serve to provide an in-depth look at a psychology graduate program in which the clinical faculty and some graduate students and their wives assisted in the initial training of public school staff and students. The focus was on interracial conflicts. The first paper discusses the general goals for the graduate students, the school staff and student trainees, as well as week-end practicum participants. The overall design of the program is intended to provide graduate students with training in what can be called "community psychology," i.e., the establishment of educational roles with communities in an effort to reach more people in more fundamental ways. Three papers explore the impact on the various persons involved. Both positive and negative evaluations are included. The implications of the Interracial Sensitivity Program for graduate training in clinical psychology are elaborated. Powerful practitioner tools, relevant to contemporary social crises, are seen as a major outcome of such a program. A final paper concerns the interface between black youth and sensitivity groups, and suggests the need for a modified and more suitable technology. (TL)

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1971 Western Psychological Association symposium: Training People in the Public Schools to Run Interracial Sensitivity Groups: A Graduate Program

First paper: History and Present Design of the Program

by

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April 21, 1971

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The papers in this symposium describe a graduate training program aimed at 1) the preparation of psychologists for extensive use of education and training in their roles in communities;

2) the involvement of psychologists in the use of intensive small group methods as a means of personal and professional development for solving social conflicts;

3) the upgrading of human relations skills of community resource people to provide on-going, non-psychologist based talent available to relevant community organizations; and 4) the heavy use of first-hand experience in small groups and organizational and individual clientele follow-up as the media for change.

This paper presents the rationale for these four goals, and describes the general format of the University of Portland project in which graduate students trained staff and students from several Portland public schools to run interracial sensitivity groups. Subsequent papers will depict more details of each phase of the project, and the apparent successes and failures. The final paper describes the results of an empirical study conducted in 1969-1970 on the precursor of the present project.

1. <u>How can psychologists best contribute to social problems?</u>

Frankly, the dominant thrust in the clinical training program at the University of Portland has been on traditional skills which prepare our students to take traditional roles in clinics and hospitals. A typical breakdown of hours in the clinical curriculum is:

assessment - 14 hours, first and second year

individual therapy - 12 hours, second and third year

group therapy - 3 hours third year

community psychology - 6 hours third year

innovative approaches - 3 to 6 hours, second, third years

Twenty-nine hours of assessment, individual and group therapy have been largely devoted to survey of theory, orientation to skills and techniques, and the research literature within the lore of traditional clinical work. The remaining 9 to 12 hours have been devoted to some innovative approaches, in which the clinician goes out of the clinic, or off of the campus, to try to help people where they are functioning in their life situations. Roughly 75% of course work, and parallel practica experiences, have been in the traditional vein.

During the Spring of 1969, and the year of 1969-1970, four members of the clinical faculty developed the prototype of the present interracial sensitivity project. This afforded two years of experimentation before introducing the experience into our regular clinical training. Each of the four of us were driven by the motive to do something more daring, and hopefully more contributory to society, than the ways we usually found ourselves dealing with the intricate details of traditional clinical work with students. The original inspiration for interracial sensitivity work came from Martin S. Levine, then a member of the clinical faculty, and Jim Sitzman and others with the Portland Y.M.C.A. It was Levine's genius that developed the basic design still largely in effect.

In the Fall of 1970, a major shift occurred when eleven of our second year students and seven of their spouses joined in the interracial sensitivity project. In this project, the role of the psychologist as an educator and trainer was instrumented in the form of training public school personnel to lead interracial sensitivity groups. Twenty-five school staff and students

volunteered for the training as facilitators; in turn, these facilitators recruited 118 clientele from their schools to participate in weekend sensitivity laboratories (the same personnel continued in the spring, and recruited another 165 clientele). The graduate students, their spouses, the school personnel and the clientele participants have generally reported very profound impact on their self-perceptions and their willingness and skills in dealing with interpersonal problems. Each graduate student and spouse spent about 120 hours each on the project, summing to 2,160 man hours or about a man-year of work. That the lives and social problems of 25 school personnel and the 283 participants have been markedly affected appears to justify the expenditure of effort.

Our approach is an implementation of the philosophies expressed by the Community Psychology Conference Committee (1966), Reiff (1968), Albee (1963), Kelly (1970), and Roe (1970) in putting the psychologist in direct contact with life in community organizations and implementing preventative, education and training techniques as a contribution to the significant social problems discovered. The rationale is consistent with the general approaches developed by Ellsworth (1968) in which psychiatric aides were trained to take more therapeutic roles with patients; by Fairweather (1964) in which back-ward patients were induced to function in an independent sub-community outside the walls of the hospital; by the NIMH-sponsored research showing that empathic women can be trained to do supportive therapy; by Cowen and Zax (1966) who propose the value of college students becoming companions to children who have behavior problems; and to the many years of effort by the National Training Laboratory to train members of organizations to be human relations

resource consultants in their own organizations.

I believe that psychologists should be much bolder in taking steps to divest themselves of the traditional role in clinics and hospitals, and to establish educational roles with communities that will reach far more people in more fundamental ways than the inevitable moralizing and band-aiding that typifies life in the clinic or hospital. People come to a clinic, at best, motivated to rid themselves of some specific noxious element in their (or someone else's) lives; they do not want to learn about how to make their lives generally better; they do not want to learn about how they contribute to major social problems and what they can do to improve them. The sociological role of the clinic and hospital as traditionally administered severely limits the potential reach of the clinician.

2. How can the psychologist best be developed to serve an educational role in the community? To prepare graduate students to be educators in the public arena where large scale personal and social conflicts abound requires radical changes in the learning environment. A major part of graduate training must be the personal self-examination and development of the individual--his values, his intellectual and interpersonal skills and weaknesses, and his preferences for how he or she can best contribute to social problems. Didactic approaches are useful, but fall short of achieving the degree of self-awareness, interpersonal acuity and communicativeness, and creativeness needed. We chose to use sensitivity training with a personal growth focus as the medium for the personal development of the graduate students. The experiences as a participant in sensitivity training were only the starting point, however, in that the graduate students and spouses subsequently were trainers for the school personnel. Thus while the graduate students continued

their own personal development throughout the project, they also tested their competencies by working with the school personnel and their school clientele. An occasional sensitivity experience, as we have offered on a voluntary basis in earlier years, is quite inadequate to the total task. Paul Brown's paper tells what appear to be the immediate effects of the project experience on the graduate students and spouses.

Implied in the above is that a number of conditions must exist in the student's overall experience of his learning environment, to which Rogers (c. 1964) perceptively and poignantly addressed himself toward the end of his sojourn at Wisconsin. Authoritarian approaches in the role as a social change agent will not work in our society; so, too, authoritarian approaches to graduate training will not produce the characteristics needed in a consultant who is effective in the community. Next, Robert Mager (1968) aptly quips, "If telling were the same as teaching, we'd all be so smart we could hardly stand it" (p. 7). Students must experience a variety of teaching methods, with each method being relevant to what psychology knows about how people absorb information and change attitudes as well as being relevant to the other objectives intended. We cannot boldly go out into the community and directly apply our knowledge by using the traditional teaching methods typical in psychology programs.

What is needed is psychologists who are "real" people, who are able to immerse themselves in the concerns of the people in an organization with a problem, and work with them to evolve an understanding and solution to their problems. Such change agent training is critically achieved by posing these issues to students: (from Buhler, 1969).

1. How do I understand myself, my life, and my relationships with other people?
2. What is human life about, what is my life about, who am I?
3. How is self-realization accomplished?

and beyond these basic humanistic goals,

4. How am I personally involved in the significant social problems?
5. What does psychology generally and I in particular have to offer in the solution of these problems?
6. What is my commitment to the solution of these problems: what should psychology do? What should I do?

These are personally agonizing and intellectually mind-stretching questions. Both rigorous intellectual development and personal, experiential opportunities are essential. These conditions place high demands on a faculty--the genuine implementation of the Boulder model of clinical training does not come easily when the role of the clinician is so expanded. More concretely, the faculty primarily interested in objective science must find at least a tolerance if not an interest in experiential learning approaches. And this is the most serious obstacle I have found. All faculty members accept a lecture or an informal seminar. But introduce more intensive experiential approaches in which students and staff share their FEELINGS??? Explore alternative values and question assumptions individuals and groups (faculty, psychology) have about what significant social problems are and what psychologists have to contribute to them? I think psychologists are second only to educators in their curricular conservatism.

All of these learning conditions were not fully implemented this year, as we began this major innovation in our training. We did, however, make a number of significant changes in our traditional authoritarian structure so that students began to find more genuine voice in policy matters in the department and in choice of what they needed to learn. The existence of the belief in a process of dialogue and change is the single necessary ingredient that students did find.

Will Levin's paper further explores these broader training and philosophical issues.

3. <u>What is the potential contribution of community resource people to to human relations problems?</u> I visited one of the high schools involved in the project recently. The counselor who was in training with us as a facilitator, and who has experienced many hard knocks this year in further implementing a human relations program within her school, invited me to attend an in-service class. Fifteen teachers, counselors, and teacher aides came. These people related to each other at a very intimate, genuine level! Potentially, these fifteen people may become a major change influence in their school. They even welcomed a discussion of the question, "Why do the high schools limit the teacher-student exposure to 50 minutes a day?" and gave a very realistic answer: "given the way the system works, that's about all the students or the teacher can stand of each other!" This person, faced with the earlier conflicts in applying sensitivity training techniques in her role in the school, had actually withdrawn this spring from further participation. But she had been able to locate the internal sources of support for interest in humanizing the school environment, and had succeeded in bringing a nucleus group together. Joanne Zusman's paper details what other changes were reported by the trainee facilitators.

The point is very clear. Lasting psychological contributions to human relations processes in organizations must come from the organization's own psychological resources. As George Miller said in his 1969 Presidential address to APA:

"How can we foster a social climate in which some such new public conception of man based on psychology can take root and flourish?....

"....part of the answer is that psychology must be practiced by nonpsychologists....Psychological facts should be passed out freely to all who need and can use them. And from successful applications of psychological principles the public may gain a better appreciation for the power of the new conception of man that is emerging from our science.

"....There simply are not enough psychologists, even including nonprofessionals, to meet every need for psychological services. The people at large will have to be their own psychologists, and make their own applications of the principles that we establish....."

".....we must use psychology to give people skills that will satisfy their urge to feel more effective.....in the beginning we must try to diagnose and solve the problems people think they have, not the problems we experts think they ought to have, and we must learn to understand those problems in the social and institutional contexts that define them...." (pp. 1067-1074)

We must be on the front lines, working with problems defined as significant by our clientele, and show them by working along side them how psychology can be applied. Our project entails a goal at the heart of what Miller is saying. We are "humanizing" the schools by helping teachers, administrators and students become more fully aware of man's complex nature and how existing school practices help and hinder the development of that nature.

The constructive use of encounter methods is seriously threatened by the growing charlatry of inadequately trained group leaders--we are giving psychology away too fast. Further, to my knowledge, sensitivity methods are relatively tangential aspects of graduate curricula, and the more exciting developments in work with the public are done by non-academicians (e.g. Rogers, 1969) or by academicians in private consultation. Thus we must both train community resource people (who are going to use small group teachniques whether we are helping them or not) to increased competency and proper ethical conduct of groups, and in those departments so choosing, make the sensitivity methodology a major focus in the clinical training.

4. <u>What is the potential contribution of sensitivity training methods to our significant social problems?</u> Encounter or sensitivity are the preferred methods when intensive examination of prejudicial attitudes (race, sex, age, education, vocation, liberal vs. conservative, etc.) is the prime goal, with the hope of basic changes in attitudes and eventually the social structures that reinforce the prejudices.

I have found sensitivity methods productive in helping people learn more about their strongest biases. I find that barriers between groups as well as individuals can be mutually understood, tolerated, or if needed changed by helping people discover (rediscover, actually) their common humanity. Mike Ebner's paper describes how we believe we have penetrated the black-white barriers. Steve Zusman's paper explains the impact of one of the sensitivity weekends on a typical white student participant.

The final paper by Ekeruo presents some data collected on a similar project last year, measuring the effects in terms of changes in interracial contacts among sensitivity participants, using a matched control group.

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1971 Western Psychological Association Symposium:

Training People in the Public Schools to Run Interracial Sensitivity Groups: A Graduate Program

Fourth Paper: The Impact on the Graduate Students and Spouses

by

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The impact of the sensitivity workshop caused many changes in the graduate students and their wives, some of these changes were similar from one individual to another, others were quite different. Because many of these changes were common to all of us I have chosen to report the impact mainly from a personal point of view. This may cause a loss of breadth of view of the impact of the workshop, but generalizations are kept to a minimum and specifics tend to make the experience more clear.

The Problem

When I first knew that I was going to be a leader of a black/white sensitivity group, I thought that leading this kind of group shouldn't be much different from any other group. I didn't realize that a three- or four-way split would separate blacks from whites, teachers and adults from students and young blacks from older blacks, and that whites and blacks had problems which were often so different that one kind of group hardly seemed able to deal with both, or that a great tension and suspicion existed between the races. The impact of how difficult it would be to pull together groups like this was very powerful.

One phenomena which occurred typically was that the graduate students were placed in the position of leader by the trainee facilitators, even though they were there to take part as initiators themselves. This is understandable because of the experience which we had in interpersonal relations prior to the sessions and the status position which we were generally accorded. The reaction to this by us was varied: some resented the continual pressure to initiate and direct almost single-handedly, while others felt that this was a learning situation and because we knew more we should be the teachers.

Sometimes the situation was resolved in a manner which gave us, the Psycholog students, a role as a model, but not the role of sole initiator of activity.

This made it possible for the group to learn techniques from our experience and to feel they were competently directed while at the same time the trainee facilitators could begin to apply some of what they had learned. These first attempts by the trainee facilitators were difficult, but necessary if they were to have some feedback on their performance.

The program was carried on for a second set of two weekends with most of the Psychology students not participating. This phase of the program demonstrated that the trainee facilitators had learned enough to adequately lead the groups when the leadership could no longer be placed upon a trained Psychology student. Their success was probably a result of their experience as participants and the modelling of the Psychology facilitators.

A general pattern of unfolding exists which usually stays constant from one weekend group to another. The black/white groups did not follow this pattern. Friday night of the weekend marathon was unpredictable. Sometimes it was very subdued and hinted of holding back and mistrust. At other times this first night together was unnervingly explosive. Saturday morning was more predictable; we could almost count on everyone being dragged out, sleepy and resistant to get into anything initially. Saturday afternoon ranged from being expanding and productive to being just too tired and anxious to even stay together. Saturday night and Sunday were not much more certain as to what would happen..

I have observed that most leaders can strongly influence the behavior patterns in their groups and impart a general feeling tone to a group, fairly consistently. The black/white groups appeared to be unpredictable in this respect, also. Some groups were warm, others anxious or split into definite factions. Undoubtedly each leader had a particular impact on the group, but the effect appeared less than the influence of the personalities of the group members upon each other.

Attempting to be a leader amidst this unpredictability is not easy.

Fortunately there were some behavioral patterns within the black/white groups which made facilitating a bit more predictable. When the group contained a comparatively low ratio of blacks, these few tended to cluster quietly in a corner and did not communicate much. I found it difficult to approach members who did not actively respond to the group process and the coolness I often perceived in these isolates made involving them even more difficult. They often said that they were bored or sleepy. As they said this they wre obviously uptight and anxious, but when questioned about this they usually denied any discomfort. A statement like "There's nothing wrong with me, I've got no problems," is typical and shows that blacks, at least when they're around whites, feel that it is a dangerous weakness to have problems or be upset. Perhaps angry or mad is a better word here, because these feelings are conceived of as being very unacceptable while being only upset is okay. They did not want to admit that they could be touched emotionally by whites. When blacks are closed in this way and are made uncomfortable by the emotional interchanges of others, particularly angry interactions, they seem unreachable. They often ended up walking out because of their built-up discomfort. Anyone will be unbearably uncomfortable if they do not voice their feelings about their growing tension. My problem as a leader was how to get them to open up about this.

Sometimes a voicing of their distrust of me or other members came about and the blacks began to open up. When even one black opened up about his mistrust or discomfort or any emotion happening now, the whole group visibly loosened and relaxed. The difficulty was in getting any black member to say more than one grudging sentence about anything. Every black was not so closed and uncommunicative, but in a group this behavior seemed to be most common.

When there were several black members in a group they often formed a subgroup which then either split off from the main group or challenged it. If a

facilitator successfully opened up one of the subgroup, the others sometimes lost their cohesiveness. Even when the group divided, it didn't necessarily stay apart long, and while it was away from the main group, the individuals were usually no more self-disclosing than before.

The formation of subgroups appeared to be most distinct when there was about the same number of blacks and whites. The whites formed a loose bond by their willingness to get into some emotional issues. The blacks formed a tighter bond of common experience and resisted being drawn out individually.

An attitude which surprised me very much at first was the reluctance of most blacks to be touched. When exercises which involved touching or being touched were being done by the group, the black members sometimes silently but reluctantly went through the motions, at other times just said, "No, I don't want to be touched." I noticed when I did touch many of the black members, especially the males, that their bodies were very tight. It was as though they kept continuous tension in their muscles.

Behind this reluctance to be touched there appeared to be a great desire to touch. This desire was hidden much of the time, probably because of mistrust and anxiety but sometimes they allowed it to be shown. In one group where the number of blacks were about equal to whites (which appeared to give them more confidence) the black members openly challenged the group and then asked for some touching exercises. They were excited and very desirous of getting involved in these, although mostly with each other and a few trusted and accepted white members.

I feel awkward talking about blacks or whites as two different entities, because I dislike generalizing about any people. I find myself doing this anyway though, because I experience the black group members similarly in many ways. After we opened up to each other all members became uniquely different, but so few black members opened up that I seldom knew them as individuals.

What I have described sounds as though blacks have a completely different response within groups, but actually the process which I experienced from them is similar to any white's resistance. The extremeness of the resistance was unusual and tended to set them apart, though. As a facilitator I wondered if a concentrated, powerful experience was most effective or needed for blacks. I question such an extreme dose because of the anxiety most blacks obviously have and because they often seemed to be more oriented toward a survival trip. They had so many real frustrations that arise directly or indirectly from whites that their resistance to opening up in a black/white group was compounded.

Alternative ways to facilitate taking part in a group experience to help open up black members would be for several weekly meetings to precede the weekend experience. This would make the shock of emotion and self-disclosure more spread out and therefore more bearable. All black groups would also be a possibility. These might eliminate the initial outer resistances which seem a factor of the black/white anxiety and suspicion toward one another.

Qualities of a Facilitator - Participant

There are some specific qualities which have proven to be most facilitating within my groups. These qualities are as effective whether they come from me as a facilitator or from me (or anyone else) as a participant. This is why I don't see a separation of facilitator and participant except for some technical knowledge and direction at a few crucial points.

One of the most important qualities is an openness to each individual and his unique modes of expression. This orientation, rather than the facilitator imposing his mode of expression, is necessary if you are to work with any and all members of a group. If you insist upon using your favorite or familiar techniques whether verbal, nonverbal or whatever, you will only be successful with a portion of your group. A search for a familiar pattern is a very Procrustean approach to

expression which robs an individual of his total potential for expression. Some individuals have their fullest expression through sound, others through movement and still others through images or any of a number of modalities. I found the discovery of the way in which each person can best express himself is the challenge to me.

A quality which is often suggested as essential for a facilitator or any helping role is intuition. I found that experience, observation and learning were necessary to me but I wouldn't call these intuitive. Before I learned what to look for in the way of behavioral signs, I felt with other people but I was not in a position to help them. It is not a magical process to know what another individual is feeling. By observing their facial expressions, their muscular tightness and looseness, their posture, movements, voice and finally their words, it is possible to know what they feel--maybe. Experience is necessary to observe all these components because we usually tend to pay attention to only a fraction of the cues an individual puts out. For instance, if a person states that he doesn't know how he feels, you don't have to be at a loss about his feelings, too. If you've learned how to observe you can draw some strong conclusions from his tight neck muscle and raised shoulders. When I told someone in the group about the signals they were giving off, they often got in touch with this feeling themselves by becoming aware of these cues. Personally, I know when I become aware of my eyes squinting and my jaw tightening, I'm on my way to being angry.

Another quality which is also vital is being interested and attentive to the person who is "working." Another way of describing this is to say that I am "here This means that I am not on my own trip, figuring out how to fit this individual to my mold and also that I am not overwhelmed by various responses to the individual which are respondant dominated or otherwise distorting. When stimuli are distressing to a facilitator, if a facilitator cannot separate a member's

impact on him from his own hyperreactivity (counter-transference, or whatever you choose to call it), he is not here but is someplace else wrestling with unresolved figures in his past. The immediacy of "now" is the key to experiencing yourself and others accurately.

A corollary to being attentive and here is giving good feedback to a person. If you are able to monitor your own system well enough so that you are not imposing your own hyper-reactions upon another individual's responses, then you can give him accurate and valuable feedback. It is a mistake to withhold your reactions from an individual because you feel it might hurt him. An interpretation of the implications of his present behavior might be very painful, but an expression of your immediate reaction to him can be given with whatever intensity is most effective to you and to him. This effectiveness is a factor of the energy which has been aroused in you and of how receptive the other individual is to any kind of feedback.

A facilitator or any member who relies principally upon feedback from others, who is constantly asking others to tell him if he "does that again," is avoiding his responsibility of being in touch with himself--monitoring his own system. This might occur because he doesn't know how to look and what to look for or because he doesn't trust his own resources enough. The reason is not of prime importance. What is important is that the best feedback is from yourself. The experiences you take part in, the conclusions you draw by observing your own behavior are the most lasting and potentially the most reliable feedback. This means that a facilitator listens to what he says and,more importantly, listens to how he says it--his tone of voice, his rate of speech, inflection and other components of his speech. He is aware of his posture, movements and sites of tenseness and relaxation in his body. The sum of all these components is potentially the best indicator of his attitude at a given time.

Practice is necessary to get good readings from your internal feedback system and this can be a part of the experience in the black/white group. When you feel uncomfortable or someone in the group feels uncomfortable this is the time to observe how you experience this discomfort. Do you have a pain in your neck, or a tight throat, or a rigid jaw? Are you talking very rapidly, using a lot of accusatory statements or speaking so no one can hear you? Instead of covering these behaviors up, the group setting is the place to look at them more closely and make them more explicit. So often negative or simply strong emotional behaviors occur in a group and are quickly covered up or blown up into a very frightening and damaging experience. This doesn't have to happen. I experienced increasing comfort in working with these strong behavioral components in myself and other members by examining how these behaviors were manifested physically and learning how awareness of them made them less threatening.

Often the simple declaration of what a member felt made the situation easier. Somehow saying you're angry or uptight served to make these feelings more bearable. When these feelings were kept inside and not made explicit, the effect was quite double binding. On the one hand there were many nonverbal cues of posture, movements and vocal tone which were sending out vibrations of discomfort while on the other hand the individual was denying all this verbally. Members tended to loosen up more as each weekend progressed and by Sunday there was often a rush to express some feelings directly before the weekend experience was over.

I've almost forgotten that one of the biggest impacts that I felt during the sessions was that having a definite technique, being calm and attentive were most effective when I also cared. The more I cared the better all the other factors worked. At the beginning the size of the group (from 15-18) and the atmosphere of tension and suspicion made it difficult for me to be very caring. But as I worked with each group for a few hours I began to relax more and more and

allow myself to care more, too. I could see the mistrust of the members of the group become less and less at the same time. Each workshop session started with a bit less initial tension and finished with more caring. This caring was manifested more in the nature of a deep concern rather than a love-type hugging and we're all beautiful display. When someone worked hard and did something in the group that was really difficult, I cared about what they did. It was not a matter of how much affection could be thrown around.

Changes

As each weekend experience passed (there were four altogether) I found some basic changes in how I perceived the group. At the first weekend I seriously wondered if this excited group of students wanted any serious emotional experience. But, as each group came and went I realized that the excitement was a facade and could be used to motivate their working. I realized that intense anxiety often underlaid the delaying and avoiding behavior the members showed. More importantly, I stopped feeling that the disruptive behavior was directed at me because of some basic differences in goals. By the later sessions I knew that the behaviors I considered real were appreciated by most members. Individuals in the group seldom came to me and said thank-you for the experience--they went quietly off to consider their new found behavior or to practice some of it.

Personally, I found myself changing in the ways I approached facilitating as the sessions progressed. Initially I was troubled by other members trying to lead themselves and getting off on useless issues such as reasons why members felt the way they did. I felt responsible for the direction of the group and I tried to pull the group back to the present. This often led to complaints to me that members felt too structured and controlled. Gradually I experimented by loosening control of the group process and some interesting changes occurred. First, the group did not wander down primrose paths to useless "head" trips as

much as I had envisioned. Second, members began to take responsibility for keeping in the here and now upon themselves to a high degree. I found that I could sit back and do a minimum of directing except when emotions became confused or a member wanted specific suggestions.

It is one thing to observe behavior and assess a member's mood. It is another to directly confront him with it. During the course of the sessions most of the Psychology students found it increasingly easier to directly label another's behaviors and emotions. One example was a group in which there was much tension, most of it being generated from one militant and controlling black girl. The facilitator asked her if she was aware of how controlling she was and of how she was attempting to play "Psychiatrist." She denied this overtly, but consequently stopped this behavior. At the outset of the project it would have been very difficult for a facilitator to point this strong negative behavior out to a member, without becoming very threatened himself. But experience in confronting many individuals with their behavior made it possible to quietly ask her if she was aware of her behavior, rather than pointing accusingly at it himself.

At other times facilitators were called upon to confront members with their own justified anger. When hostile group members sabotaged group processes which might lead to real experiences, facilitators were frustrated and found that only by giving the saboteurs the natural consequences of their actions (i.e., others' frustration and anger) would they realize how their behavior was impacting on others.

One process which became progressively clearer to me as a facilitator was projection. I was struck by the use both blacks and whites made of it. I use projection to describe the process where one individual confuses what he is doing to himself with what he perceives someone else is doing to him, thereby ascribing his own actions to someone else operating on him. A black student became very

incensed at the whites in the group because they had no idea how frustrated he was and didn't seem to care. He accused some members who tried to reassure him that they did in fact care about him. He succeeded in inducing some guilt and extracting sympathy from them. At first I didn't know exactly what was happening. I knew that I cared about him, but I didn't feel sympathy or guilt about him. Later, I realized that he was projecting his feeling of not caring and actually he didn't care enough about his own very real difficulties until he expressed his frustration to the group.

Another instance when I did recognize what was happening and did confront the individual with my observation was when a young woman in the group suddenly shrieked at an older woman in the group that she was just like her mother, that she was very despairing and hopeless. I pointed out to her that she sounded very hopeless herself. She realized quickly that this was true and owned her hopeless attitude (i.e., her projection). In this case the woman she accused of being so hopeless actually was behaving despairingly. The projection here was supported by accurate perception of the other's behavior, and a lack of awareness of her own emotion. There is always some realistic basis for a projection, sometimes small and sometimes quite large. The function of the projection is always the same, however; that is to be aware of another's feeling while ignoring your own.

Time after time I experienced untangling members' projections from each other, helping each to find his own feeling and more accurately identify the other person's. Once this untangling occurs, the two parties seldom stay in conflict with each other. The site of the conflict moves to their own confused feelings and they then can set about untangling these.

Further Questions

How responsible is the facilitator for moving the group? Usually the main motivation within a group is anxiety and all a facilitator has to do to build

anxiety is to wait in silence. Then when anxiety builds for a while one member will eventually speak up or the facilitator can ask a question such as "how are you experiencing the mood in the room?" which will elicit an outflow of responses like pricking a balloon. This is a process I think of as induction, and I feel it should be used wisely and sparingly. A case in point was when a trainee facilitator baited a black student and pretended to be hostile. Although this was a role-play, the situation became explosive and could have ended in a fight or more likely a loss of the student from the group. The student understood it was a role-play on the facilitator's part and at the same time resented very much being made fun of. The basic mistake in this situation was that the facilitator did not portray his real emotions, he assumed a false role that he hoped would help the situation instead. When a group comes together for the purpose of expressing real feelings it is a contradiction to deliberately falsify emotion. What you give the group members for a model is you being phony. Your feedback as a facilitator is valuable and adequate to move a group, there is enough real emotional material without faking any.

One issue which was troubling to facilitators was whether a disagreement between two of them should be discussed within the group. Sometimes this was messy. Loud disagreement ensued for a time and finally a grudging silence was declared between the two litigants. Other situations worked out much more satisfyingly. When one facilitator began to ask for feedback from some particularly silent and bored looking members, she found herself frustrated by a lack of responses. Soon she was making her demands more strongly and continued by grabbing him by his shirt and shaking him violently(like the gangsters always grab the guy by the lapels). Another facilitator disagreed with this course of action and asked her to stop. He then asked her what she wanted from the participant. She responded that she wanted some feeling, some kind of feedback on

her impact upon him. When the participlant heard this he told her he didn't know why she wanted him to say something at first and so had remained silent and suspicious, but now that he understood that she wanted feedback about her impact on him, he would tell her. He also stated he had nearly hit her when she shook him. This situation could have been explosive and damaging, but because the facilitator's disagreement was made known to his co-facilitator, the situation was resolved instead. Most situations of disagreement can be resolved when both individuals give their feelings and not opinions. When the disagreement involves indirect allusions by criticism of technique, procedure or other product, no confrontation can occur, but when one facilitator can say that he is anxious when another facilitator behaves aggressively, the emotions can be dealt with directly. Now, instead of a long drawn out argument on how to proceed (usually a power struggle) the two can express their emotional reactions to each other and subsequently resolve them.

One problem I felt strongly was how to deal with feedback about my facilitating from the group. That is, how and when would I modify my behavior because of what members said to me. I received comments ranging from "you organize too much" to "aren't you going to step in and take care of that?" These are the two poles of a continuum dealing with control and only illustrate one aspect of contradictory feedback. There are many others. I came to the point where I would always check two response systems: mine and the feedback giver. In the case of the comment about too much organization, I observed that subsequently the girl who gave it attempted to organize the group herself and in a very rigid manner. But at the same time I observed myself as sounding somewhat controlling and perhaps being out of touch with some members of the group. Usually I found that feedback from the group was partly accurate and partly a projection of their own wishes, with the balance shifting from one interaction to another.

In Retrospect

When the workshop began, I had no clear idea in my mind how I would set about training facilitators. I tried asking the trainee facilitators to take over at a specific time at first, but this seemed too much too soon for most. Gradually I found that my modelling and answering questions or just saying what I felt had happened afterwards was about the most effective way I could train facilitators. I received feedback from some facilitators who went on to lead their own groups that they had, in fact,learned a lot this way. Of course, each facilitator made many inputs in their function as a group member; they tended to make more inputs than non-trainee members and often initiated interactions which I might end up facilitating. The most valuable facilitating any person can do is to report what his feelings are toward himself or another. This was an experience which I felt I wanted everyone in the group who was interested to have.

Looking back on these demanding sessions I realize that my expectation of a nice flowing group experience didn't fit here. I couldn't walk in, sit down and say, "Okay, who's ready to work?" It was necessary to meet and label suspicion, fear and a lot of other strong emotions which choked off the natural process of meeting, opening and working at being aware. No group ever reached a feeling of trust and togetherness that a uniracial group does, although some individuals within the groups opened up and became aware of some profound behavioral manifestations. But, I learned more and more that what did happen in the group was an important beginning in opening enough to become aware of some behaviors in the presence of people of another race who you are not at all sure are sympathetic to what you are doing. We replaced fear and mistrust with some caring--only for short periods, but a start. Confrontation occurred between people who were cast in the role of adversaries and sometimes the stereotype was

broken--not always. The strongest changes I can feel in myself are a new assertiveness which I sometimes found was all that would stop members from avoiding contact ad infinitum, and a caring that allowed me to see the same members as anxious and fearful when they stopped avoiding contact. The opportunity to practice shifting between these polarities of assertiveness and caring has been a valuable experience for me--almost enough to balance the anxiety and exhaustion I also experienced.

1971 Western Psychological Association Symposium:

Training People in the Public Schools to Run Interracial Sensitivity Groups: A Graduate Program

Third paper: Implications of the Interracial Sensitivity Program for Graduate Training in Clinical Psychology

by

Will Levin

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Take a look in some of the recent journals and you'll see that everybody is publishing proposals for improving graduate training programs in clinical psychology. Everybody, it seems, except the graduate students themselves. Now I don't want to start off by giving the impression that I don't welcome and appreciate the good intentions and good ideas of the established psychologist. But isn't it only common sense, when deciding how to train clinical psychology students of the seventies, to find out if the clinical psychology student of the seventies has any insights to offer on the subject?

In the hope that it might be helpful for the older generation of psychology department members to have a better appreciation of the kind of creature he is dealing with when he plans training programs for graduate students, I would like to first present some of the considerations that contribute to the special perspective of the student in 1971. It seems to me that the personal reactions of the students themselves should constitute a major source of data for those who are deciding how to structure the course of their experiences over a period of several years. Second, I will talk about some of the drawbacks I see that are an integral aspect of many graduate psychology programs. Finally, I would like to describe why my experiences with sensitivity training and the Portland Public Schools has been the most rewarding training experience I have had as a graduate student at the University of Portland. As I discuss the reasons for this reaction certain considerations will become clear that have implications for graduate training programs in general. That this particular project

succeeded as a training experience was no coincidence. The reasons for it follow quite logically from the issue that I intend to raise at the outset.

I guess the outset has arrived. Suppose for a few minutes we try to imagine what it might be like to be me, or someone like me. I want to do this not out of sheer vanity alone, but because I think that my concerns as a graduate student are not atypical of those shared by many students who are anticipating careers as people-helpers. A glimpse into my experimental world should be valuable as a means of appreciating the viewpoint from which a future psychologist assesses the future of psychology. Really, the most important fact that I want you to consider about me is simply that I was born in 1946. The proper emphasis here is not that I am young, because I am a full-grown man, married three years, and with a diverse array of experiences behind me. Rather, I would like you to realize such facts as these: that as a child I had to live with the awareness that the grownups knew how to destroy the planet by the push of a button, and that there was no good reason to believe they wouldn't push it any day now. I want you to understand a small boy's confusion at watching on television a news feature on the conditions of the black slums in Chicago, interrupted periodically by an insincere voice persuading me of the luxury and prestige of owning a brand new 1951 Oldsmobile. I want you to realize the alienation of an adolescent whose difficult adjustment to adulthood is confounded by the senseless murder of a charismatic president who represented to him a rare and precious source of hope. I want you to realize the pessimism a young man for whom World War II is prehistory, can feel when his leaders insist

on glorifying war as an intelligent means to their ends.

I could go on to talk about growing up during the unfolding of such issues as the racial injustices which led to numerous acts of violence and the assassination of another leader; about watching on television the vicious conflict between young and old one Chicago summer; about the rise of drug dependence among my generation and those younger as a means of dealing with reality; about the destruction of the natural environment at the hands of man's own thoughtlessness and greed. I could go on to describe a hundred more events in my lifetime that would strengthen my point, but there is no need.

And what is my point? Simply that the young adults of today have lived their whole lives with a heightened awareness of the gravity and urgency of the crises that they have inherited. While every generation brings a fresh perspective to the responsibilities of their adulthood, the explosive advancements in communications, and the dramatic increase in the rate of knowledge accumulation has nurtured a new generation which is more sophisticated, informed and aware than any that has preceded it, and more responsive to the challenges that continual cultural change presents. Traditional values that have in the past played a vital role in the evolution of the American culture are now no more than obsolete myths, whose perpetuation is more harmful than beneficial. And the graduate student of today is painfully aware of these discrepancies between traditional attitudes and the requirements of the future. He cannot be content with acting out clearly defined roles that have been handed down to him by his

elders. He cannot be satisfied by spending his efforts on token repairs of a system that is built upon outmoded premises in the first place. He is not interested in mending the broken spirits of an individual only to return him to the same culture that caused his collapse.

The combination of a lifetime of pessimism and alienation plus an intensified awareness of the self-defeating realities of today's social institutions leave the perceptive young adult with essentially two alternatives. He can withdraw from the chaos in despair, or he can try to mobilize his impatience into constructive action. For many of us who choose the latter alternative graduate school represents only one more traditional institution which holds no promise of fulfilling the objectives it was originally set up to achieve. For these persons, graduate school is a cop-out, a cheap channel to power, which eventually leads only to a comfortable insulation from the real issues that must be confronted.

But some of us still maintain enough optimism to respect the experience of those who seek to teach us. We come to graduate school in the hope that we can benefit from that experience, and with the belief that we will come in contact with persons who are sincere in their efforts to bring about change. We come with a commitment to trust the judgment of those who determine so completely the experiences to which we will be exposed. And we come with a genuine curiosity and openness to what is presented.

But something is going wrong; our trust is being abused. According to one study published in the American Psychologist (Knox, 1970) close to half those students who seek the doctorate degree in psychology withdraw from

the graduate program before completion. Those that do survive are selected out largely for their ability to display skills having almost no relevance to what they expected to learn in the first place.

Carol Rogers (1967) has discussed several of the attitudes reflected in the training programs of most psychology graduate departments, which lead to nonconstructive outcomes. "Very briefly," says Rogers, "....we are doing an unintelligent, ineffectual, and wasteful job of preparing psychologists, to the detriment of our discipline and society.....granting that American psychologists have not been noted as pioneers, it seems to me unnecessary that in our graduate programs we should so frequently display timid or reactionary patterns which put us in the backwaters rather than the wave-front of history (p.55)." He goes on to outline ten damaging implicit assumptions of most psychology departments, which basically come down to a discouraging description of graduate training: The student is not free to structure his own training experience, but is rather an encaptured slave who must passively digest a spoonfed diet of lectures and assignments. He is perpetually evaluated until his main concern becomes not helping society, but surpassing his colleague on the next examination. Too much of his time is spent in accumulating disconnected bits of knowledge and methods, and not enough in actively integrating and applying them. The American Psychological Associations Committee on Education for Research in Psychology (1959) has stressed that the most valuable training experience that a student of research can receive is to do research with a skilled researcher. He seems reasonable to assume that the same principle applies to learning clinical

skills as well. Both Rogers and the APA committee report emphasize the importance of the personal encounter between teacher and student as a crucial ingredient for effective training. Yet the graduate student all too often suffers the familiar alienation that results from being treated as a product on an assembly line rather than a growing, creative, person with genuine emotions, even though empirical evidence has been gathered to support the notion that "informality and warmth of student--faculty relationships" is correlated with a high rate of production of doctorate degrees (Thistlewaite, 1963)."

James Kelly (1970), in a recent article, hit the nail on the head when he made this statement: "Psychologists snear and smart over the arrogances and disdains of radicals, militants, or the citizen with conservative reflexes. The most arrogant guys around are often we professionals who analyze, position, reflect, study, commission, postpone, garble, intrude, and play with, but rarely play out, the cross currents of community events. It is our quiet and sometimes folksy and affable arrogance that can interfere with colleagues' and students' opportunities to adopt tentative explorations and offbeat enterprises that are an integral part of psychology (p. 524)."

Students see society collapsing around them, and they come to school to learn how to reverse that trend. When they get there they are met with required reading assignments and highly competitive examinations. They may be expected to absorb a lecture on the interpretation of the Rorschach in one class while the required readings for another class describe why the Rorschach is a useless tool. Only a very lucky few actually get anywhere

near the desired amount of active problem-solving experience in the first two years of their training. When they do get the chance to plunge into the actual front lines, they are usually left pretty much to their own devices to sort out the effects of their intervention. They seldom get a chance to acquire the know-how that comes best from working shoulder to shoulder across a variety of settings with a more experienced psychologist. Any personal interaction that they seek, with faculty or fellow students, is gained only at the expense of taking time away from the more pressing demands of completing the reading assignments before the next examination. The system is structured to reinforce the passive student who locks himself in a room with a stack of books. The questioning, active, student who is committed to more involvement than a textbook affords him is systematically shaped into foregoing that commitment and devoting his energies instead to learning to live with unreasonable and unnecessary levels of anxiety. How else can he survive when his examination performances are constantly and compulsively evaluated by a lecturer who feels it important to make fine discriminations among students so that he may rank them in a normal distribution ranging from good to bad? Graduate school becomes not the ideal training environment that the student naively expects it to be, but a competitive jungle in which all concerns for others are forgotten and an every-man-for-himself attitude is the only adaptive approach. No wonder so many young people who want to contribute to society end up either quitting graduate school or failing because they cannot summon the motivation to enact roles that are so contrary to their goals. And no

wonder that those students who do survive the treadmill so often seem to be alienated, negative, and so jealously protective of their newly won professional status.

Now that I have let all this despair out of my system, let me refresh you with a bit of enthusiasm and optimism. I want to tell you about a training experience that a number of second year students at the University of Portland were involved in last fall, and to point out why this particular experience overcame all of the obstacles that the traditional approach to graduate training invariably fosters.

The project involved the application of sensitivity group training techniques to the challenge of establishing more effective communication among high school students, teachers, counselors, and administrators in the Portland Public Schools. I will leave the detailed description of the structure of the project to other members of this symposium, and will instead talk about the needs of the graduate student that were met by the project. These needs can be focused into three general concerns: The experiential world of the graduate student as a unique person rather than as a role-enactor; The student's acquiring of interpersonal skills and competence; and the student's involvement in effecting social change.

I have already tried to lend an appreciation of the personal reaction a graduate student might feel in his role. He has reason to feel confused, resentful, mistrusting, alienated, iconoclastic, impatient, and angry at the way his life is manipulated by the school structure and threatened by his peers and teachers. The first phase of the sensitivity training project

effectively dealt with the feelings of the students by involving us in the planning and the experiencing of a weekend encounter among ourselves. That the issue of the student's personal emotional growth was even acknowledged as worth the consideration of the graduate faculty represented a major shift from the traditional attitude of psychology departments. Psychologists in the past have somehow managed to overlook the reality that training persons to help people requires training them to be persons first.

Morris, Pflugrath, and Taylor (1969) make some sense when they say, "The differences between students of the fifties can partly be understood by the questions they ask: What is significant? What is the good life? What is morality? How can I love? What is worthwhile? What matters and what do I stand for? How can I make connections with my own feelings and the feelings of others (p. 191)."

Phase One of the project, our own weekend encounter group, made its primary goal the exploration of just these kinds of personal concerns of the graduate students. The group was led by Bill Banaka of the faculty, and was conducted at the Oregon coast, far from our customary academic environment. By Sunday evening, graduate students who had been stiffly polite but essentially anxious among one another were now open and genuine, trusting and committed to each other as persons and as colleagues. We felt more aware of our own patterns of experiencing and behaving, and more secure in ourselves now that we had shared and accepted each other's individuality. And we were finally able to transcend the concerns of emotional self-preservation to look beyond ourselves to larger issues.

We were glad to be graduate students in psychology.

The next phase of the program required us to assimilate the insights and techniques we had acquired, and to now apply them to leading groups of our own. With this phase we began to come to grips with the challenge of acquiring expertise as specialists in the issues of interpersonal relations. We did so not through textbooks, although we were supplied with a list of relevant readings (which were suggested, not required), but through practice. We learned by making decisions for action, acting on those decisions, and assimilating the consequences of our actions. We learned by observing each other as we worked together in teams, and by supplying each other with feedback. We learned by teaching, in our roles as consultants and follow-up resource people to the school personnel and students. The result for me was an intense, utterly absorbing learning experience which, despite moments of frustration and discouragement, was the most rewarding, growth-producing training experience I have had as a graduate student. I came away with a new-found sense of competence as a group leader, and with the feeling that I had developed real abilities that I could confidently offer to those who sought and could benefit from them.

As the project unfolded, I went to the readings to clarify for myself the theory behind my actions, and I realized how the meaningfulness of my reading was intensified because of the opportunities open to me to actively experiment with the ideas of the writers. The interchange between study and practice maximized the benefits of each.

This kind of structure provided us with the opportunity to continually

integrate theory with practice over the course of the four weekend encounters and weekly meetings in which we were involved during the semester.

The dual need of the graduate student that our project met is his desire to be meaningfully involved in the critical institutions of society, to be truly effecting change where it will count. In facilitating the genuine interpersonal encounter among blacks and whites, among high school students and school policy-makers, among young and mature persons, we were right in the middle of really crucial issues. We knew that if we could bring these segments of society together to communicate their attitudes and share personal concerns, then we could make a significant impact on the entire educational structure. This was no classroom lecture; this was the real thing, and our awareness of what was riding on our performances inspired us to involve ourselves completely. We could not afford to be anything less than fully and personally committed to our goals when so much was on the line. We learned to evaluate our efforts by picking up on the observable effects we were achieving among our group members, by sharing feedback with our co-leaders, and by using the data of our own subjective feelings during the group process. The course grade we received was essentially only an administrative requirement, and had little bearing on our feelings of what we had accomplished. We knew that we had accomplished a great deal, and that awareness was a far more rewarding outcome than a grade of A could be.

I have tried in this paper to accomplish three major objectives. First, I wanted to express what a graduate student of today expects of himself and of his teachers, and to describe how the external circumstances of his past influence and shape those expectations. Here I hoped to make

clear how the new generation of adults is unique from all those that have come before it. Next, I wanted to show in the light of what we know about students of today, that much of the structure of traditional graduate training defeats its own purpose. I emphasized here how the behaviors rewarded in school conflict or are irrelevant to the roles sought by the student. Finally, I described my own experience with sensitivity training in the Portland Public Schools, and demonstrated why I feel it is a useful example of how graduate training can be effectively implemented. In particular I talked about the need for concern for the student as a growing, responsive person; the advantages of training competence through active problem-solving and decision-making, and the importance of involving students in situations where significant social change is the potential outcome of his commitment.

As a graduate student myself I have felt the perspective of my colleagues has been inadequately represented in current controversies over graduate training. I hope that I have helped correct that imbalance, and that I have awakened a soul or two to the possibility that students are worth learning from, too.

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1971 Western Psychological Association symposium:

Training People in the Public Schools to Run Interracial Sensitivity Groups: A Graduate Program

Fourth Paper: The Impact of the Project on the Trainee Facilitators

by

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A central focus of the interracial project was the development of people in the schools as group facilitators. The people were professional educators and high school students who wanted to learn more about adapting interpersonal relations goals and techniques in their organizations, especially goals and techniques pertaining to interracial problems.

This paper describes the specific steps involved in working with the trainee-facilitators, and portrays the patterns of organizational participation for the seven high schools and three elementary schools from which they came. Results are presented in terms of the trainees' own self-evaluations.

Training

The trainee-facilitators' obligation in this $2\frac{1}{2}$ month project consisted of three weekend experiences and ten three-hour Wednesday night sessions. The initial weekend consisted of an intensive group experience as a sensitivity participant, led by previously trained graduate students. For the following two weekends the facilitator-trainees were divided into teams of four to seven each (each including one or two graduate students) to serve as small group facilitators for students, faculty and parents recruited from the Portland public schools. The Wednesday night meetings were used for follow-up, for evaluation, for planning future weekends and for relating.

The trainee-facilitators were recruited from the Portland public schools. The goal in recruiting was to obtain a racially balanced group of 15 teachers and counselors and five students. The teachers and counselors were recruited by letters sent to the administrators of the elementary and high schools. The students were recruited by the teachers and counselors who were going to participate in the project. As a result of these letters and personal contacts, 21 people were recruited. They were composed of six teachers--four men and two women--seven counselors--five women and two men--and five high school students--three

men and two women. There were also three women who were not connected with the public schools. One was a juvenile court counselor, another a woman employed by IBM, and the third an undergraduate student from the University of Portland. Out of these 21 people eight were black. There were five black men and three black women. No other racial minority was represented.

Four of the goals of the program, for these trainee-facilitators were:

1. To increase their skills as facilitators in interracial sensitivity groups;

2. To know more about how sensitivity training fits the needs of a school;

3. To find several ways in which they can constructively humanize their performance in their organizational roles;

4. To develop a close, creative relationship with those clientele whom they recruit to participate in two weekend practicum laboratories.

Method

Self-evaluations in terms of the four goals were obtained from facilitators, who completed a questionnaire on the last Wednesday night of the workshop. Eighteen of the 21 questionnaires were returned. Content analyses were made of the completed questionnaires.

Results

In relation to the first goal of increasing one's skill as a facilitator, all of the teachers and counselors felt that their skill increased; however, the way that their skill increased varied among the different people. Many of the people talked about their skill increase in terms of their own self-awareness. Some people felt that they were more in touch with their feelings and that they were able to express what they felt. One counselor said that she can "dare a little more." An elementary school teacher for the first time was able to

express negative feelings and "work through" her anger. Others felt that they had become more direct. Several people said they were more comfortable with themselves. An elementary school teacher said, "My self-confidence is the highest it's ever been. I feel nine feet tall and capable of nearly everything." A high school counselor said, "I <u>feel</u> so different most of the time about myself and about my students that what I do seems different to others." One person said that she learned how to listen. As a result of this experience another said, "I found out that I like myself for what I am and really accept other people for what they are." A black counselor who throughout the $2\frac{1}{2}$ months said, "I'm fine, I've got no hangups" remarked at the last session: "I feel like there was a tremendous amount of gain that was received by me in particular . . . you know you have hangups yourself, but there are some that you don't admit because you don't take a second look in the mirror, primarily at yourself."

The students, too, felt their skill had increased. One student felt that she was more comfortable speaking in a group, another said that he was more tolerant of others. Almost all felt that they now said things which previously they would have kept to themselves. One student did not like the fact that he had become more open and forceful as he found himself trying to take over too many things.

Thus goal number one, "to increase your skills as a facilitator in interracial sensitivity groups," was accomplished by all 18 of the respondents, especially in terms of personal growth and directness of expression of feelings.

The second goal for the trainee facilitators was for them to know more about how sensitivity training fits the needs of a school. All of the professional educators saw interpersonal relations training as an important aspect of education. One counselor felt that it was the "best tool for problem solving." Some people felt that this experience enabled them to be more aware of feelings

of others in the school. They felt that with this awareness they were in a better position to attempt change. A teacher put it this way: "Schools are in a process of change and in order to change, interpersonal relations problems must first be solved."

Almost all felt that this training should eventually be part of the school curriculum. One teacher said, "Schools need a way to explore feelings and this is it." This training could be used to increase a teacher's level of awareness and openness as well as to help students explore their feelings. To acknowledge students' feelings as legitimate is a much needed change. This change was made by one teacher after her participation in this project. Another teacher stated, "Many students are under a great deal of emotional pressure while they attend school. If they are given an opportunity during the school session to recognize feelings, they can operate better."

An important way this training has been used is to break down fear--fear between black and white, student and teacher, and teacher and administrator. One teacher used the skills she learned to do "trouble-shooting" in her classroom. A male elementary school teacher's response to this goal was as follows: "I feel this can all be summed up by the girl in my class who was quiet, very shy and extremely introverted. She came to my desk at 3:00 the last day before vacation, put her arms around me, hugged and kissed me and said, 'I love you because you love kids, really take an interest in us and you really care.'"

The students' feelings were mixed. Basically, they all felt interpersonal relations training should fit the needs of a school, but in reality many found that what they learned could not be implemented or tolerated. Some found that people did not understand what they (the facilitators) were doing, and also found that they needed help to implement what they learned in the schools. Others felt that human relations change would occur, but not for a long time--"It's

too early now." Seventeen of the eighteen facilitators found ways that sensitivity training meets the needs of their schools.

The third goal and question on the evaluation was, "Have you found ways to apply what you've learned (humanize your performance) in your role?" All of the facilitators' answers were positive. What they were doing differed from individual to individual. Several of the people said that they have more physical contact with their students. They are not afraid to touch. One teacher said that she was able to "relate direct emotions" to the administrator of her school, something she had never been able to do before.

Five of the educators have started groups in their schools, and a court counselor has started a group in juvenile court. A high school teacher has formed a group, led by one of the psychology graduate students involved in the program. This voluntary group composed of 12 students, two teachers and a graduate student meets weekly for two hours after school.

The values of this project and the values of the educational system are not always in agreement. This same teacher spent one of her class periods allowing a student to express some intense feelings he had. She was later told by her administrator that she was not to spend class time on such matters. In her words, "I use the techniques learned in the classroom to a very limited extent--by <u>instruction</u>, but after school,students come in to work on problems involving emotions." This is one of the problems encountered by many involved in such projects. Some of the teachers, counselors, and administrators approve of personal growth and affective responses, but many are too threatened by it and are not ready for it. Others are reported to "approve" only by word, never by action.

A grade school counselor has established groups among eighth grade students; she also facilitates a group of beginning teachers. A high school counselor is

teaching an inservice class on interpersonal relations. Another has begun leading counseling groups in her school. An elementary school teacher is in the process of establishing a "drop-in" center in his neighborhood for children of all ages. He sees this as a means of improving communication. This same teacher says that 40 to 50 children try to see him each day "just to rap, if nothing else."

Although most of the people were able to "humanize their performance," many were experiencing repercussions of expressing what they felt. One of the teachers expressed the feeling that she was continually getting "kicked in the teeth." She and others felt they needed more support in their school, more people who were doing what they were doing.

Once again the students' feelings were mixed. Two of the male students had negative feelings. One said that he was cutting classes more and the other felt that people didn't know what he was trying to do so he ended up hurting people. The three other students felt more positive. They felt that they were being rewarded for direct, honest expression of their feelings.

The fourth and final goal--developing close relationships with clientele--was evident in almost all cases. If the relationships were not "close" they were at least honest and open.

A final question asked for suggestions on how to improve the project. Many would like to include more people, both staff and students, from their own school. They felt this would make it easier for them to implement what they had learned, and increase the possibility of having interpersonal relations training in their school. Another suggestion was to include more blacks. Some people felt that this was a white program, run by whites, and relevant only to whites. It was also felt that many of the student-participants became part of this project before they had any idea of what they were getting into.

Consequently it was suggested that there be a pre-session orientation. At the orientation people should be given a clear idea as to the goals and nature of the experience. The session could also be used to answer questions, reduce anxiety, and allay fears. Another suggestion was to have follow-up groups in the schools. Some felt that administrators and parents also need to be involved.

To summarize, all of the 14 adult-facilitators who returned their evaluations felt that they had achieved all four of the goals to some degree. There seemed to be the strongest feeling of achievement on goal number one--all of the professionals felt that they had increased their self-awareness and that this in turn helped them facilitate more effectively. Least achievement was reported on goal number two--many of the adult facilitators complained of opposition they were encountering in their schools and lack of support. It was felt that more people were needed within each school to help implement change and to give support. The only discrepancy in the largely positive responses among the facilitators was found among the 4 student-facilitators. Their feelings were mixed on all of the goals.

Discussion

One reason for this could be the unique position they found themselves in. They were alike yet they were different; they were students, yet they were different from their friends in that they were supposed to have more training. They were told that they were equal to the teachers, but in school this was not true. The difficulties that the student-facilitators had were an exaggeration of what happened to the adult-facilitators. They were overpowered by the psychology graduate students and the adult-facilitators, in that both the psychology students and the educators were trying to facilitate and had more experience than the students in doing so. They also had a difficult time implementing in school what they had learned in the program.

During the experiential weekend for the facilitators, most of the student-facilitators never "worked through" any of their own problems. They were able to meet the level of intensity asked of them without having to explore any of their intense feelings. Most of these students had been selected by the counselors as "ideal" for the group, and consequently, they adjusted far easier to what was happening than did the adults, and most of the attention was, thus, focused onto the adults. Also being in the minority (16 to 5) the students may have been hesitant to "expose" themselves. Thus the student-facilitators never really got their chance to be participants and never took the risk of becoming facilitators. They did serve a function however, that of liaison between the students and the adults. As there were only five student-facilitators, it is difficult to tell how much of their response was a function of them as individuals and how much was a result of the situation they were in.

The training program as a whole seemed to be a success. All of the adult-facilitators reported improvements in their counseling and teaching skills and gained an increase in their own self-awareness, which, in turn, gave them a locus on the students, administrators, and other staff.

All the facilitators would probably agree with the black counselor who said, "I'm sorry that it's over . . . . These are things that we have to learn and we have to learn to live together because, God knows, they're still going to come here black and white. This is a beginning . . . . It's a beginning to bring together even this small group in mutual understanding. . . . So I'm looking forward to the next time."

1971 Western Psychological Association Symposium:

Traihing People in the Public Schools to Run Interracial

Sensitivity Groups: A Graduate Program

Fifth paper: The Impact of a Weekend Laboratory on Participants

by

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University of Portland

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION,& WELFARE
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THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

The whole notion of relating an intense experiential weekend in objective terms leaves me a little cold. In an attempt to retain the experiential nature of what happened, I will attempt to put myself in the shoes of some sort of "congiomerate" participant. It would probably help if you could put yourself in these same shoes--think of your own son or daughter, or some of their friends, or one of your clients, or one of your students, or, if you are willing, yourself, at the time when you went to high school. The thoughts and feelings which I attribute to this participant are obtained from my own observations; from subjective reports from teachers, counselors, and others involved in the project. During this project, I was involved in fast starting, fast moving, intense groups; this paper reflects that bias. It should also be added that the conglomerate participant is probably more representative in the beginning than in the end of the paper. Students' reactions to the project varied; most were positivie, some negative.

Now, first of all, I'm sitting around school doing what I usually do--I'm bored, disgusted, and/or playing the school game. As I sit around school I realize that the world is kind of falling apart around me--there is a war going on that has been around for seven or eight years ... the environment is polluted, which kind of means to me that I may never live to be an adult ... the country is at war racially, and even though I pride myself on my own lack of racial barriers I know that I don't have any, or very many, black friends. And that doesn't seem real cool to me since I'm above prejudice. And, to top it off, I'm sitting here at school, where I'm supposed to be learning something, and the teachers don't seem to care about me at all, and if they do care, they can't convey it, and they don't seem to be teaching anything that's relevant anyway. In fact, the whole system seems to be perpetuating the same factors which caused the world to be where it is. And now, they want me to learn it,

too. And to top off the whole, entire mess, I can't vote, no adult really cares what I say, I can't change much in the world since I can't vote, and I really feel impotent. So I take one of a number of routes (some of these being): I play the school game as best as I can, hoping that I will either rise above the confusion, or else that I will have some power over it; or, I semi-giveup, sort of make it through school with as little effort as I can, and feel quite discouraged; or, I really give up, say to heck with the whole mess, and hate everyone connected with the system and somewhere underneath, hate even myself. So I spend a lot of time at school searching for something to belong to, for an identity, for some worth. I may try to get into some clique--you know-- the hip kids, who talk about loving everyone; or the "soc" kids, who do a good job of playing the society game by running the school or by getting good grades; or the dropout kids, or any other type of kids that happen to be floating around. Or, maybe, I sit on the sidelines with my one or two friends knowing that all the cliques are stupid and futile, but kind of wishing that I were in one of them anyway.

Then some teacher, or counselor, whom I sort of know, comes up to me and asks if I want to go away for the weekend and learn something about human relations. Do I want to go away for the weekend? I want to go away for a week, or a year, or five years. And do I want to learn something about human relations? Well, man, isn't that what it's all about?!! And then this counselor hands me a sheet of paper which has some goals written on it and has a parental consent form attached to it. Man, this is a scary piece of paper and this is a fantastic sheet of paper. It really scares me because I have to get my parents to sign it. Like, my parents trust me and all; they always tell me that, but, somehow I don't really think they're going to groove on the idea of me splitting for the weekend. I mean they trust me, but well, you know, there's all those things to worry about when you go away. And then there's the matter of the goals--

to understand and express yourself better; to understand and accept others better; and develop the ability to resolve tensions and conflicts between individuals and groups, including interracial issues. WOW!! That's tremendous--especially that part about expressing yourself better. I can't ever say what's in my head. And how about that part that talks about understanding others? Like, people confuse me so much sometimes that I don't know what is happening. And how about that racial stuff--that is real, man, that is real!! And all this falls under some gigantic heading at the top of the paper that says Inter-personal-Interracial Laboratory. Whatever that means--well, at least that mouthful of words has a certain ring to it.

So I look up this counselor the next day and I tell her, "Sure, I'm interested, tell me what's going on." And she says, 'Well, it's kind of hard to explain, but we're having this orientation meeting 3 or 4 days before the weekend experience, and some graduate students from the University of Portland are going to be there." Now I don't understand what's so hard to explain, but this thing still sounds too good to be true, so I won't give her any heat now, and I'll wait to find out what's really going on. Still, I'm a little more skeptical now than I was when I went in to see her.

I go to the meeting--wow, they even call me out of class to come to the meeting. As I'm going in, I'm thinking that the meeting would be okay, except for the counselor who isn't going to answer my questions, anyway, and then there is the matter of these college students--graduate something or others. They'll probably be as bad as the counselor, but, at least, maybe they'll be able to answer my questions and tell me how all this fantastic stuff is going to happen. I kind of hope that there is a bunch of students at this meeting, because I hate to get lectured to by more than one teacher at a time.

I walk into this meeting and there are only about ten other students there, and I'm waiting for them all to come in, I'm getting kind of nervous. The first

thing I notice is these college students--they're kind of dressed like I am, and I think that's kind of weird or something. I can't figure out whether they're on my side or on the counselor's side. I really don't know what to make of them. And when all get seated and one of them counselors or graduate students get talking, they ask, 'What are your questions?" and none of the students respond. And I look around, I mean, can you believe it, like none of them respond. Like, here it is, a big opportunity, and none of them respond. And then finally one of the students says, 'Well, what's gonna happen up there?" and, "How's all this thing gonna get run?" and he asks it in a cracking kind of voice and I realize that he's probably as nervous as I am. But I'm kinda relieved because he asked my question, so now I wait for an answer. Oh, man, the answer is just about as bad this time as it was last time. It starts out with one of the graduate students saying, 'Well, it's kinda hard to explain but ..." And my whole body kinda groans because it doesn't look like this guy has the answer either. And then the graduate student explains, and the counselor explains along with him that the way that this is all done is for everybody to get in touch with his own feelings. And before I can figure out what that means, this guy says, "Hey, like, let me show you, like, I'm nervous, man. Like I'm here talking to you students and I really want to see you in this project. I think it's a good thing. I'm nervous, I'm uptight, I'm afraid that you guys won't like what I have to say or you won't like me." Well, can you beat that? He's nervous, too. He's a bigshot, he's not supposed to be nervous! Hey, this is almost starting to sound like it's going to be good again. And the graduate student and the counselor begin to explain that the weekend will emphasize communication, and communication starts with yourself. And as the meeting goes on, I realize that the graduate students and the counselors are calling each other by first names and they're disagreeing with each other. And as the meeting continues and they relate their feelings to

us, and they show me that they're just as human and frail and confused as I am, I begin to get excited. Like, maybe I'm not at the bottom of the heap after all, and maybe there's something to this. So, even though I'm still a little bit confused because nobody's told me exactly what's going to happen, I'm really pretty excited about going on this weekend.

Somehow I get my parents to sign the form. We go through our usual arguments, and I listen with half an ear. I say "yes" to their usual list of things that I shouldn't do, and, thank God, they put their name on the bottom of the paper.

When I get to Menucha, about half an hour's ride outside of Portland, I notice there seem to be about fifty other students there, and about half of them are black. There also seem to be about fifty adults. About a third of these are black. It's right before dinner time, and I notice that as everyone comes in, they start throwing their arms around the people that are already there and hugging and kissing, and ... Oh, my God, I've finally made it to an orgy! And here I am, too uptight to enjoy it! I'm not really sure what's going on. I'm not really sure whether this is phony, or what it is. I go to the registration desk and I'm told that I'm in Group 4 and I meet in some building called the Greenhouse. When I ask the guy what I'm supposed to to now, he says that dinner is served in about fifteen minutes. So I wander off into a corner and kind of look around for people that I know. I don't see anybody, so I just watch what's going on. And I see all these kids and all these adults kinda getting together. Some of them seem like they're really enjoying themselves, really happy to be there. But others, like me, are sorta wandering off into their own corners. Some people even seem to find corners in the middle of the room. After dinner, everybody is gathered together and we're told that we have to stick with our groups for the entire weekend and

that if we do have any problems, either with our group or personally, we can come back to this building to some place called the "Dropout Center." There will be a couple of kids and a couple of adults in this Dropout Center and this guy is trying to make it sound like they're really groovy people to talk to. Well, I guess it's an okay idea. We're also told that our group will run tonight, Friday night, from 9 o'clock till whatever time it breaks up, and that even though there will be music and records in this room we're in now, we can't use them until all the groups have finished. And that tomorrow, Saturday, breakfast will be served at 8:30 followed by a group from 9:00 - 12:00, followed by lunch from 12 to 1, another group from 1 - 6, dinner from 6 to 7, and then a group again from 7 to whatever time we break up. And then Sunday morning, breakfast and lunch will be at the same hours and the group will run in the morning from 9 to 12 and then that's it. So who cares, and who could remember all that stuff if they did care? Then they tell us again that if we don't like what's going on in our group that we should come to the Dropout Center before we split. Well, that sounds cool. Then they dismiss us to go to our groups.

So I figure out where this Greenhouse building is and I go there. By the time I find it, it seems like most of the other people are already there. I guess I'm even getting a little more nervous now because this is where it is all supposed to happen, I guess. The first thing that some college student guy says in the group is, "No dope, No booze." Oh, well, here comes the rules. But he tells me that this project's being run through the Portland Public Schools and that if they ever got wind of dope or booze the project would be down the drain. And then goes on talking about something else. Well, it almost sounds like he trusts me. So I figure I'll play ball. No dope, no booze. As I look around the group I learn that there's about five people that they call "facilitators." This seems to be some combination of college

kids and the counselors. There's also one or two adults there that are just called adults, not facilitators. The other ten of us are high school students. About half the students and two of the facilitators are black. And this college student keeps on talking and he gives me a similar type of thing to what I heard at the orientation meeting. So what's new? And while he's talking, I notice that the facilitators are sitting in a clump on the floor but the students are scattered all over the room--some of them on chairs, some of them on couches, some of them on the floor. And pretty soon this guy starts talking about his feelings and he says, "I feel this..." and, "I feel that..." Wow, the only thing I feel like is getting out of here--fast! Then this guy throws us students a curve ball. He says something really precise and specific like, "And where are you?" And everybody just sits there kinda quiet and finally somebody volunteers some information like, 'Well, what are we going to do here?" And all of a sudden it seems like we're moving somewhere, and people keep asking this guy, 'Well, how does this make you feel?" And other people keep saying, "Yeah, I know how you feel." And all of a sudden it becomes clear again that this guy's just as afraid to be here as I am. And he starts talking about his fear and he starts experiencing his fear. And I slowly begin to realize why it has been so hard for anyone to tell me what it's like. Like, I always thought I knew what experiencing was. But the more this guy talks and the more other people try and help him find out where he is, I'm beginning to feel more and more afraid too, and beginning to experience my own fear. And as about an hour passes, I guess, this guy really gets into his fear ... I mean, like, he starts shaking, man, I mean, right in the middle of the room! And after he shakes for a little while, he stops shaking because he's not afraid anymore. And all these other people in the room, especially the facilitators, give him these hugs. They tell him they know what he's experienced. They've been there. And he seems like he

really appreciates what they're doing. And he hugs them back, and touches them. Like wow, this is really something else. Like, I'd really like to be where he is. But I'm not going to sit there and shake in the middle of the room.

And for that matter, I'm not going to give this guy a hug! I'm not so sure that I'd like to hug any guy, much less this character whom I've only known for a few hours. But his head sure seems to be in a good place. He starts telling us how he usually walks around looking "cool as a cucumber" and "unperturbed," and that it always seems like everybody likes him, but that he's never really been sure that they'd like him if they knew what was inside of him. Oh, man, this hits home with me. I mean, there are some things you just don't show to anyone, and there are a whole lot of things you don't show to most everyone. But I'm still not sure if I fully trust what's going on here--I mean, one guy who feels a little bit what I feel ....

After a short break we do some kind of exercise, and somebody calls it a sensitivity exercise. Oh, wow, now I know I'm in trouble. I've heard about this sensitivity stuff. My parents have told me how this is kind of immoral stuff. This exercise, called "back-talking"-- where you sit back to back with someone, and try to communicate with your backs--leads us into relating how we felt during the exercise, and what we learned about our partner. And while we're going around the room saying how this back-talking thing made us feel, some guy, who had been kinda pushed around by someone else's back, says that he is always pushed around. He really seems angry. And, wow! Before I can figure out what is going on, he is standing there pushing at us, and we're standing there pushing back at him. Wow, can this guy push! He pushes about four of us three-quarters of the way across the room before we slow him down and push him back. And he's still pushing back so hard, that we're huffing and puffing. When he's done, exhausted, he sits there and tells everyone how he's been afraid to push back before.

At about one o'clock in the morning the session ends and we're told that we'll meet again at 9 o'clock the next morning.

As the weekend goes on I learn that they call these intense emotional experiences, "trips." I always knew that trips was what happened when you took pot, but I've never seen any trips like this before.

Saturday seems to continue where Friday night left off. We do another exercise and we do one or two trips. But me, I'm kind of split down the middle. I mean, on the one hand I'm getting vibes of a beautiful world where you can say what you feel, and people can respond with what they feel; and where you can admit that you're not perfect, and that you've got some problems; and where, somehow, all this expressing and experiencing and feeling allows us to trust each other and love each other and allows people to be able to show it. Man, show it! But, on the other hand, there is something unreal about this, something that I don't fully trust.

And I'm feeling more open myself, now, so I say all this to the group. And, oh boy, I have made my fatal mistake; doomsday has arrived! Before I know it, there are three people grabbing one hand, and there are three people grabbing the other hand, and they're starting to pull my body apart! Brother, those words about "on the one hand" and "on the other hand!!!" It's the last time I'll ever use them again! And somewhere in this frantic scramble the voice of some facilitator is saying, "If you want to try this, it may help you to experience the feeling." And while I'm thinking, "Nuts to you, facilitator! I wouldn't have brought it up if I didn't want something," I decide that this is no time for smart remarks. I mean, like, my life is at stake and so I start pulling my hands back from those six monsters.

And I pull, pull, pull ... every ounce of me pulls, every ounce of me is in my arms. "Give them back"... pull ... "they're mine" ... pull ... "I" ... pull! ... "W A N T" ... pull!! ... "T H E M" ... pull!!! ... "B A C K."

And it's over, and I'm whole. And I feel very light, and very free. I'm at peace with myself, and this allows me to be at peace with the world. I don't exactly understand what happened, and I don't care. I notice that as I sit there for the rest of the afternoon, I am better able to relate my own feelings--I am more aware of when I'm angry or sad or joyful and I am more willing to express it. And I also find that I am more tuned in to the words and feelings of the other people in the group. I know what feelings they evoke in me--and in this way, I understand them better.

Saturday night comes and I begin to realize that there hasnt' been too much in the way of interracial contact. I mean, sure, when the blacks have been there, and some of the blacks are always there, we have had our squabbles, and I begin to understand them a little bit better. But it doesn't really seem like they're getting as much out of this thing as the whites. One of the members of my group has been to the Dropout Center and said that he got a lot out of it. I was kinda close to this guy and I trusted him so I figured, well, maybe I'd go to the Dropout Center too. So Saturday night I go. When I get there, I say to this guy, "Hey, what's all this interracial stuff that's supposed to happen? I mean, like, there aren't any blacks in my group. I mean what kind of interracial weekend is this if the blacks are always meeting by themselves?" And the guy tells me, "Well, why don't you go and bring that up to your group?" Well, that seems like good common sense. So I go back to the group and I say, "Hey, what about all this interracial stuff? There aren't many blacks that are sticking around here." And the guy hits me with, "Well, how does that make you feel?" Now, hey man, I'm really grooving on this weekend and i'm really learning a lot about myself and others. But how does it make

me feel? Well, interracial stuff is one of the main reasons why I came here. It MAKES ME FEEL CHEATED, that's how it makes me feel. It just doesn't seem to me that they could be getting anything out of it; I'm sure not getting as much out of it with them not here. Then somebody says, 'Well, wait till tomorrow morning and we'll ask them." What choice do I have?

And as the weekend goes on it seems like about 80% of the whites that are there are getting about as much out of it as I am. Like we're really relating. We're really talking to each other like human beings. We're giving up our fronts and talking about our barriers. We're doing crazy things like touching each other and telling each other when we're afraid and when we're angry. We're being open with each other and even two or three people who don't go on trips seem to be getting a lot out of it. They seem to melt right into the atmosphere and seem to relate at a deep level. This seems to be how the world should be. I mean, we got problems, sure, but we get down and we iron them out. And as I look around at the meal times and as I leave my group I notice that most of the other groups must be functioning in the same way. I mean, like everybody's really able to communicate, to tell people where they're at. Wow, this seems fantastic. And I notice some of these people whom I've only known for a period of twenty-four hours I'm relating to and I feel like I know them better than some of my friends whom I've known for ten years. I'm not sure quite what to make of that, and I'm beginning to wonder what happens when we leave here.

Well, Sunday morning comes and lo and behold the blacks are back. And some guy again brings up my fear, "What happens when we leave here?" We start to role-play that and I begin to understand that I can always be honest if I want to be, or if I choose to be. It's my choice. This makes me feel a little better because I begin to feel like I can carry some of this stuff

out with me. Then somebody gets around to asking the blacks where they've been and what they've been doing. I'll be darned if that black who starts talking, doesn't start relating my own feelings. How it's been a groovy place here, how the world should be like this, how for once in his life he found some whites whom he thinks might care. Now this all sounds great, but I don't know whether to really trust it. I mean, how could this guy who has only been here about half as much time as me in this group have gotten what I got, and I really don't know what to make of it. But there he is sitting in front of me saying it. Wow, I don't know! I've been here a day and a half already and I still don't know!! After a few closing exercises we go to lunch. Our last meal here. After lunch we sit around. I watch. There are people crying and people who just don't want to leave. Man, I don't want to leave either. It seems like almost all the people have grooved on this experience as much as I have. Wow, I'm not anxious to go back. In fact, I don't want to go back. But at least there's one hope. I learned that on Wednesday nights I can come to the meeting that the graduate students and the counselors go to. And I'm also told that if I have any problem and just want to rap that I can go in and see the counselor who brought me here. And I've been told by the graduate students that I can call them if I need them. Well, I don't exactly understand what all these "problems" that I'm supposed to have are going to be, but it's nice to know that I've got people to rely on.

So I go home, and I begin to see the problems. I walk in and I see my dad watching some pro-football game on T.V., and I say, "Hey, dad, this weekend was really great. We had this really fantastic group, and by the end of the weekend we were all really grooving on each other." And he says, "That's nice, son, why don't we talk about it when the game is over." When the game is over!?! When the game is over !?! I may be a thousand years old by the

time that game is over!! Doesn't he understand that I'm telling him about me? Doesn't he think that I'm more important than a lousy football game? Doesn't he care? My insides scream, "LISTEN TO ME," but somehow these words get stuck in my throat, and I don't say them, and I leave the room. And I feel very unprotected, like an open, bleeding sore. NUTS TO THAT WEEKEND! Who needs all this pain?

Monday morning rolls around and I keep mulling over in my mind our group's role playing last Sunday morning. It seemed so easy to say that being honest and open was a "choice" that you make--that you can express your feelings if you want to. Well, now, I don't know if I want to! I want to be able to express and experience my positive feelings, like love, and acceptance and caring. But I don't know if I want to express my negative feelings, like fear and anger. And I sure don't want to be hurt again. Can you sneak by with just the positive ones? Or do they all go away when you shut off the bad ones? Oh, oh, I remember someone in the group saying that when you shut off the pain and the anger and the fear, that you shut off your ability to express and experience the positive feelings, too. Isn't that where I was at the start of this whole weekend? I sure don't want to go back to that--that would make the whole thing meaningless. Maybe I'll try again.

I'm kind of nervous as I get to school and so I decide to sit back a little and see what happens. But before I can act on my decision, I meet this girl who spent the weekend in one of the other groups and she runs up and throws her arms around me in the middle of the hall. And at first I feel kind of foolish and stupid, but then I begin to realize that she is sincere and warm, and that she's not just playing some new game that she's learned. And I like the hug; and I hug her back and we really groove on each other and this whole business of getting into your feelings really seems like it's worth

it. Wow! How could I ever think of giving this up? And I don't even care too much, when some of the people who pass by us in the hall give us some really weird looks, like we're crazy, or sex maniacs or something.

But as the day passes, I find that things aren't always so rosy. Like when I try to explain what happened to me this weekend to this guy who sits next to me in one of my classes and I tell him how scared I was when the group started, he looks at me like I'm some kind of weakling, or something, and tells me not to be so scared all the time. Now that weakling look kind of annoys me and I say, "Listen, I'm not scared all the time, that's not what I said. I'm just telling you what I felt <u>then</u>." And he mutters, 'Who cares!?! and turns away from me. This kinda hurts. In fact, it hurts so much that I feel crushed. Is this what it means? Get into your feelings and chase away all your friends, or acquaintances, or whatever they are. I've become a villain! And I begin to realize that I'm doing a different thing, and some people groove on it, some people give me honest and open comments back like they're grooving on what I'm doing. And some people, they don't know what to make of me. Like I'm a weirdo or something. And it's kind of frustrating because it seems like I've changed, but the school hasn't. There are still the groups, and the cliques, and the teachers. I mean, I feel like I could relate to my counselor now, but I don't know what to make of my teachers. And now when I'm in class and I see something that I don't like, that doesn't make sense to me, there is an impulse--a strong impulse--to tell the teacher that I don't like it, to tell her that it doesn't make sense. And I try this out on one or two teachers and I find out that their reactions are as varied as my friends' reactions: some of them react to me with what seems like joy and we really get things straight between us. And others, they put me down and they don't know what I'm doing.

By this time I've decided to go to the Wednesday night meeting. I go. I'm more skeptical than I was last Sunday afternoon, and I really wonder if it's gonna be as fantastic there as it was on the weekend. And then I walk in and I know that it's all true. I'm greeted with the same enthusiasm and sincerity that I found on the weekend. And after about an hour of the business meeting, which I can't stand, we divide up into our small groups again, and we discuss our problems. And it happens again. The other people in my group are having the same kinds of experiences in school I am, and the same kinds of experiences with their parents that I am. And what really throws me is that most of the blacks in my group are back too. Wow. Maybe it really did have some effect. I learn that one of the people in our group was really feeling bad when she got home and couldn't put the Menucha experience together with her own experience in school. And that a graduate student had gone out to talk to her along with her counselor, and that she was getting along okay now.

Above all, I know that I'm really thrilled to be there and I hear other people telling that they're really thrilled to be there. And I know that I have found a part of me that I hadn't found before, and I decide again to try and keep that part and not block off my feelings. And I know that it's gonna be really hard to stay less defensive. I know it's gonna be hard to always relate openly because I've already taken my bruises, and I've felt the hurt. But I think it's worth it. And I decide that I'll try the best I can. And as I look around me and listen I hear some people making the same kinds of commitments. And I can see others making compromises like, I'll open up on Wednesday nights, but that's it!

And while I'm sitting there in that room, I hear about other things that make me think that this project really can work. I hear about an incident in

one of the high schools which involved a knifing between two minority group students. And I learn that following this incident there was a big meeting of all the blacks and I learn that some of the people from our group and some of the people from some of the other groups were involved in helping to get people to calm down and settle the issue. And I also learn that one of the black facilitators who works at IBM has gone to one of the high schools to be a student aid. And I hear people describing how at their high school the whole mood has changed. I know for myself that it has been a kind of neat experience to have graduate students come into our school.

The following Wednesday I go back and we have this meeting with two honcho administrators from the public schools. And I begin to learn more stuff. I hear one of the counselors say, "There has been a definite, noticeable difference in our halls since the second Menucha for those young people we had up there .. It is not intangible. You see the difference ... smiles, the expressions." And I hear another student say, "I just want to say that after Menucha I really learned a lot about myself in dealing with other people and about having honest and open communication. And I'm really finding out that I like myself for what I am and really accept people for what they are." I hear a black student say, "Before I went there I had a feeling like whites really did't care what happens to the blacks ... I'd be thinking in my mind (about whites) like you really don't like me 'cause you don't understand me. You're not trying to! ... I felt like whites were trying there (Menucha) ... You do want to get to know (people) you can trust besides your own race. There has always been some type of barrier ... In other words, this Menucha thing has helped me a lot." Man, I wonder what group he was in

and I wonder how long he stayed there. And I hear another girl say, 'When I first got into my group, I had almost every single person stereotyped ... I went in there and I thought everyone was crummy. I really got to know everyone. I've never met anybody that I've liked so much. It was really neat. When I went back to school this feeling came over me and everybody that I had stereotyped just faded away. Like I can see that there are groups in our school but the groups didn't frighten me." And I heard a black student say how crazy he thought everybody was when they first began to touch but that now it helped him to know where he was and where they were. And I heard a counselor relate how one of her students came back and wanted to teach the whole student body how to do the "Menucha thing." And I heard people talk about love and I knew that I needed love and I knew that while I had been on that weekend and when I came to these Wednesday nights I found love and I found acceptance and I found people who cared.

And I kept hearing the administrators ask questions like, "How long is this going to last, this wonderful feeling that you all have?" And I was miffed at that guy, maybe because he was asking the same question that I was asking myself. Like what would happen when we no longer had these Wednesday night booster shots? The only thing that I know for sure was that there had been a lot of things I had learned and that even though I knew that my emotional high would not always stay with me, nobody could take away from me what I had learned.

* *

If the foregoing description left you a little up in the air about the ultimate benefit of this program then I have accomplished what I have intended. Here are some data about impact.

1) Most data seem to indicate that the participants saw the labs as an overwhelming success. There were thirty-four students at the first weekend and eighty-five at the second. Two weekends have been given subsequently to the two described in this project, both over-subscribed, and many of the white students and virtually all of the black high school students wanted to return. The total number of first-time participants for the four weekends was 157 students and 36 adults; second-time participants numbered 54 students and 11 adults; and third-time participants numbered 14 students and 2 adults. About two-thirds of the returnees were blacks. In fact, at two of the high schools the blacks had encouraged the total black student body to come to a weekend. The reactions of the whites were a little more mixed. Virtually all wanted to return for at least a second weekend. Some whites became frustrated over the fact that their home environment was not changing while they were.

2) Many of the whites were not significantly reached on the racial issues during the fall. Some of this can be attributed to the lack of regular attendance by blacks, since they were doing their own thing (to be related in another paper). When in the groups blacks were far more willing to express and experience positive feelings such as love and acceptance than they were to express negative feelings such as fear and weakness. These latter would appear to be far more threatening to blacks in their home environment. This added to the frustration of the white students. Another reason, more importantly, is that whites are far less able and willing to deal with their white racist feelings.

3) The program significantly corrected two faults normally attributed to sensitivity groups. First, there was a Dropout Center to which students who were having trouble could come. This means the small groups were not an all-or-none affair; there was a real alternative for releasing pressures. Second, there was a built-in follow-up in terms of Wednesday night meetings and the availability of counselors-facilitators at the students' schools.

4) There is some evidence that the effects of the program have generalized to the school environment:

   a) Students and counselors alike have reported that the school atmosphere has changed. This is somewhat supported by the increasing number of students who have signed up for subsequent weekends.

   b) In a number of cases, students have reported encountering their teachers in open fashion. This has led to varying results, some of them positive.

   c) Students and counselors alike have reported that two racial incidents have been handled by people trained in the program.

   d) The program has probably been most effective in strengthening the trust and communication level between the students and counselors who were involved in the program

5) There were four cases of negative experiences reported. These were attended to at various times by the project director, the school counselors, and the graduate students. These cases ranged from total disenchantment with the program to the need for therapy. Since participants were screened only by the counselor-facilitator from their school, this would appear to be an excellent record.

6) The project appeared to be successful both with "problem" students and with "normals." Counselors and past participants did succeed in recruiting the alienated student, who was more likely to have personality and/or adjustment problems. The weekend experiences appeared to be equally effective with both categories of students.

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THE INTERFACE BETWEEN BLACK YOUTH AND SENSITIVITY TRAINING[1]

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I want to start out by discussing white racism a bit. What it amounts to is that white racism is the entirety of Western culture. If you trace back where we came from, how we got here, and what's going on now, what you find out is that the entire culture has largely been based upon a distortion of a couple of things: Christ's teaching and the Jewish culture. The result has been that the basic, ultimate orientation of the entire culture has been: 1) man is a beast and cannot be trusted; 2) therefore he must be constantly controlled; and 3) because he can't be controlled by positive means because he can't be trusted--if you put a carrot in front of him he'll take the carrot and go after the stick and he'll run out of control--you therefore have to use external punitive control means. That is the basic culture out of which we come.

Calvin added another little trick to this. He said that the interface between man and God must be direct, and that God displays his pleasure and displeasure with an individual by means of the degree to which the individual has a successful life. The way that worked out was that a man's worth became his wealth. That is, his worth as a human being began to be measured by his wealth. It's no accident that a question that is still asked of a prospective suitor for an upper middle class daughter is his Dunn & Bradstreet rating, and that we ask, "What's he worth?" when we want to know how much wealth a man has. The result of this outcome is what I have come to call economic fascism. You measure a person's worth by his wealth. We've been doing that in this culture since it's inception, basically, but we've been doing it particularly intensely in the one hundred years since Calvin.

It doesn't matter whether the individual that you regard as inferior is a woman, a black, a young person, a child, an old person or a gay person. What does matter is that they are poor or that they're powerless to control you or to control the circumstances of their lives. And that is how we measure people. The ability to control the environment is largely related to the amount of wealth you have and therefore to the amount of worth that you have as far as your contemporaries are concerned. And it's that kind of a system of beliefs and attitudes that's been ingrained into all of us--into the whites in particular but into the blacks also --that we carry around when we interface with other people. And it's this very subtle kind of trip on the ability to control as the basic issue between people and the only basis of evaluating people that is the very essence of white racism --and black racism.

In addition to this general trip, you have the problem that the black youth face, which is that they are black and they are young. In this time of rapid cultural evolution, the young are the people who are the harbingers of an emerging culture. Therefore, black young people experience racism on three fronts: 1) they experience it because they are young, disenfranchised and poor, 2) they experience it because they are black, and 3) they experience it because they are the symbols and carriers of a very frightening cultural phenomenon. Needless to say, this creates a little bit of feeling on the part of black youth.

In addition, white women are dating black men while white men are not dating black women, which leaves the black women thoroughly disadvantaged--given, for instance, that there are nine white women for every black man and only one black

[1]A paper presented at the meetings of the Western Psychological Association, San Francisco, April 1971.

man for every black woman. There are reasons for this phenomenon. The white women, because they have been,so to speak,allowed to grow up like Topsy, with little concern for being shaped into some ideal type comparable to the ideal white male image because they are considered unimportant by this culture, have been allowed to become people, especially in this time of great cultural turmoil and change. The result is that they are further along into the type of orientation and behavior pattern that will be required in the future than are the other three groups in this dilemma--the white men in particular, the black men, and the black women.

What it amounts to is that the white male is the one who controls everything. It's no surprise that the blacks refer to white society as "the man." The white male has the culture backing him up 100%, telling him that he must control his feelings, he must control his behavior, he must control his environment and he must control everybody that's in his vicinity. Everybody else is the victim of this phenomenon, and at the bottom of the pile is the black woman. The white women, because they haven't been as enculturated due to the fact that the culture hasn't paid that much attention to them, have gotten ahead and generally speaking are more full people at this point in time. The result is that they are not nearly so control-oriented and they are much more concerned at this point with relating to real people. So what they find in the black men are men who make a thing, if you will, of being expressive, of expressing soul, of being who they are, of being "out of control." Part of this is the old black culture stud role for its males, part of it is the resultant of black pride, and part of it is simply reflecting the considerably less emphasis on control of feelings and behavior that has always characterized the black subculture. That's where the attraction lies for the white woman. She sees a <u>real</u> person who is willing to do something besides tromp on her, control her and hold himself encased.

The black man, in his turn, is faced for the first time with a person who will respect him. The traditional orientation of the black woman has been encapsulated in the one-word culture: "FOOL!!!" They have been castrating, putting down and destroying their men as a result of the power orientation of the overriding culture making damn sure that those black "bucks" <u>don't</u> get any power. And they do it by hiring the black women and not the black men, and in numerous other subtle and destructive ways giving the black women power over the black men and destroying the black man's self-respect, his social value and his ability to be respected by others, especially by black women. So the black men are finding that the white women are respecting them, the first time in their lives they have experienced that. To be sure, the status that a white woman still carries with her in the black culture is involved in the black man's interest in her. But much more important is what happens when he interacts with her, which is that she behaves toward him in a million little ways that convey to him that she <u>respects</u> him as a person.

The black women are in a period of profound ambivalence, transition, and great fear and rage at this point. They are moving in the direction of behaving toward their men with respect, taking the cue from the white women, whom they have been watching very closely. But it's hard, damn hard. They've been in a position comparable to the white man's position. They've been in a position of power over their black men. They've been ambivalent and rageful about this all along because they have also been exposed to the overriding cultural expectation about what is a good man and what is a good woman. They have also hated the mistreatment of them and the lack of social worth their men have displayed. But they have also had, within the limits set by their position in society, what the white women have not had--the prerogatives of power. And it becomes a matter of how much do I want to give up in order to get what I'm needing and wanting? Especially from these

dudes who have been reared under the system where I have the power and who regard me as their natural enemy, like a black widow's mate. The result is that at this point, the black woman is the one who is in the most turmoil. She is also the one we have the most trouble with in the groups, because she has so many feelings toward all three of the other segments of this system going at once, and she is in no mood to give them much or to trust them very far.

To complicate the picture a little further, informal evidence strongly suggests that black youth are functionally superior to both whites and their black elders. For instance, if you stop to think about the American blacks, not necessarily blacks in general, in terms of their genetic pool as it resulted from how they got here, one can't help wondering about this possibility. For it will be recalled that the slavers went over to Africa, marched them through the jungles of Africa in chains, throwing the bodies on the sidelines as they went, then dumped them into boats like sardines and threw the bodies overboard, after which they auctioned off those who were left. At this point, the buyers who had the most money and who could provide the best care and surrounds got the best physical specimens. Given the findings by Terman and others that physical superiority is highly correlated with mental and intellectual superiority, it looks as though we may have compressed into a few hundred years an extremely fast evolutionary process in the American blacks. They may well have ended up with a superior genetic pool going here, with, of course, some watering down as the whites have miscegenated with them and "mongrelized" them.

Now with regard to the young blacks, when you add to the superior genetic pool the kinds of things that have happened to this generation and to no other preceding generation, like the media impacts, the terrific chaos and change of the last twenty years, the information explosion, the technological impacts, and the other culturally enriching and mind-expanding experiences that the recent culture has produced and the impact that all this has had on their developing minds and brains like it has had on the young white people, you begin to get a picture about what I meant in my initial statement regarding superiority. For the black elders have as much trouble relating to their youth as the white elders do. There is a large cultural, cognitive, and perhaps even physiological gap between these people and the rest of the population.

What it amounts to is that we are dealing with a bunch of people who are one-down in every relationship and system, but who for a number of reasons functionally are operating at a superior level, especially among themselves. Superior to those with whom they are one-down and to those who operate the systems in which they are one-down. This was exemplified to me one day in one of the groups of which I was a facilitator. One of the black youths suggested that the whites try to imitate the black way of talking and interacting and that the blacks try to imitate the white way of behaving, so as to get a feel for the other group's experience. So we whites tried a few crushingly limited and stereotyped gestures at imitating what we had been witnessing daily and what we had been intensely attending to in the group. It dribbled out in a few seconds. Then the blacks began to imitate whites. They chose as one of their subjects my behavior. They imitated every nuance, every large word, every stylistic aspect, even the idea rate in exquisite detail. They did this for both male and female whites of widely varying characteristics. At this point they embarked upon a role-play of a couple of blacks running into each other on the street.

What followed was an exchange that lasted approximately one minute. It was full of slurred words, incomplete utterances, almost Chinese-like tonal inflections

that conveyed ideas, facial expressions, gestures, postures, movements, and intensity variations, with many of these responses occurring simultaneously and tumbling over each other helter-skelter. The result was the transmission of enough ideas, questions, information, suggestions, reactions, feeling expressions, opinion expressions, and other meanings to have filled about 7 or 8 minutes of white communication time, we found when I spelled them out in my style of communication for the group.

Now the public schools are a white-oriented, middle class oriented, white male oriented system. The message is very, very clearly communicated to the blacks that they have no business in that system. They are also non-reinforced and even punished in their own subculture for turning on the "talk trip," the "whitey head trip," "whitey's silly big words," and so on. They just simply are not given any support for being a part of the school system, for trying to be a part of the white middle class male power-oriented system, and they begin to drop out from all the subtle punishment and discouragement and boredom and to form a subculture of their own in the schools, since they are required to attend. They adapt to their equally angry and despairing black compatriots. And they are sent messages of relief and subtle approval when they do so--until they start to do the black expressive thing in the halls. Then "the man" imposes his external punitive control and subtly and not-so-subtly sends the "you don't belong here" messages again. And the rage grows, while those who cause it talk to themselves about the inferiority, irresponsibility and irrepressibility of their "charges." And they begin to show in true self-fulfilling prophesy fashion that they can't handle academic work, shared space and equipment, self-control requirements, and other tasks demonstrating "minimally necessary" functioning.

Now because of the racist restrictions of opportunities of the type I've been talking about, and the assaults of their self-respect by every interaction they have with whites, and with each other quite frequently, rage is rampant in the black culture, and among black people. And the black life experience is basically that of a hostile jungle, especially for the black young men, who have to constantly demonstrate they can hold their own verbally, physically, and strategically in their day-to-day experience. Vulnerability display of <u>any</u> kind is considered to be <u>extremely</u> dangerous, as a result. The ability to be reached, to be impacted upon emotionally is, in essence, the kind of thing that happens when you tell a marauding lion, "I'm here, and I don't have a gun." And the lion is "the man" --and his black brothers and sisters.

The result of this kind of a living experience and life culture is an extremely competitive, exploitative, hustling, hassling, jiving, aggressive, noisy, sullen, silent, distant, nonparticipating, disrupting black brush-off manner, when a black youth is faced with "whitey's thing," which is what they regard the sensitivity process to be. Whitey's thing is based upon the assumption that people trust and can be trusted, and the heart-felt conviction that comes out from black youths again and again on those occasions where there is a confrontation is that, "You sons-of-bitches are a bunch of <u>phoneys</u>. You don't <u>really</u> mean what you're doing here." I, in particular, because I imagine of my semi-hip appearance and open manner of behaving, receive a <u>lot</u> of that type of accusation. They couldn't <u>believe</u> the openness and directness with which I typically did things was anything but a front. And they often ask questions like, "If I ran into you in Meier and Frank's, would you hug me?" The other manner in which they communicate their distrust of the whole scene is in the form of a devastatingly sarcastic and ironic slight distortion of the manner in which we behave while engaging in the process.

This latter response makes you realize in a very vivid way how really far from reality our so-called trust in a sensitivity session is from the realities that we face out there and the realities that they face out there. They see it as our trip, not theirs--a trip that they feel profoundly is not trustworthy. And this seems to have some basis in fact, to judge from the behavior of most whites on those rare occasions when the blacks gather as a group and confront the whites with a few glares, hostile postures and veiled threats. Almost invariably the whites display a profound, literally paranoid fear of these 10 or 15 young black people when this sort of thing happens.

As they experience it, whitey needs to learn to relate, not them. And to some extent they are correct. Blacks, when they get into groups, are extremely efficient at making emotional contact with each other. They immediately congregate together and set up a communication system, drawing upon the systems they brought with them. Whites, when they get into groups, try to put as much space between each other as they can, and they are terrified of each other.

In essence, the blacks don't need to learn how to relate, they need to learn how to love, while the whites need to learn how to relate and how to love. And we are using the sensitivity sessions to get the whites to learn how to relate and how to love while at the same time we are trying to get the blacks to learn how to love. And they are stuck with the process of sitting back watching the whites stumble around trying to learn how to trust and to relate, and their typical reaction is to drop out from all the subtle punishment, demands and boredom into their own subculture, to the accompaniment of subtle messages of relief and approval--until they start to do the black expressive thing in the halls. Then the subtle "you don't belong here" messages start. Or they start to inject little disruptions or indirect expressions of anxiety into the process in the form of giggling, for instance. This elicits the subtle rejection messages and/or heartfelt anger for the damage to the process that it produces. And this usually results in their dropping out into their own subculture again.

While they are gone, the process of learning how to trust and relate is often completed by the whites. Then when the blacks come back, they see the whites engaging in affectionate behavior, often between members of the same sex. To them, this is the ultimate in vulnerability display. And that comes little short of terrifying them, with the result that they go up against the walls and then split again. And they rejoin their subculture with its continuously anger-related relating style. They play practical jokes on each other, they wrestle, they tease, they jive, which is basically a lot of hostile exchanges and put-downs delivered with a smile, and so on. Faced with a large group, they turn on the brush-off and the phonograph, filling the space with their culture and their music, and rather effectively controlling the scene with the volume of the music and their dancing. If you've ever dealt with blacks as a group dancing in a physical space and realized how really inept you are physically, you know how much control they can have over a situation simply by turning on a phonograph. Especially when they turn on soul music, to which most of us have had only limited exposure and to which we have little idea how to dance.

Nevertheless, in spite of all these limitations, the impact of all of the 120 people in the procedure under discussion in this symposium relating to each other around the music, around the dancing, around the tensions created in the small groups and whole business is unmistakable. And of all the groups that come out of these sessions--the white youth, the white adults, the black adults and the

black youth, it is the black youth who are the ones that have the worst re-entry problem. Because the whole thing impacts on them more probably than anybody else.

For the first time, they get a notion of who whitey is out from behind his wall of power and self-control. They find out who <u>they</u> are and the fact that it <u>is</u> possible to trust somebody without being decimated. They find out that physical affection between the sexes doesn't necessarily mean sex is its basis. They find out that two men can hug each other without being queer. They have a whole series of experiences that blow their minds. Then they go back to the black jungle and to the two cultures with often diametrically opposing standards and requirements.

When they return to their doubly hostile world, they really run up against it. Consequently, you'll find them alternating between openness, articulateness and trusting, and hostility, putting down and aggression, depending on the circumstances that have intervened, the surrounding people, and the circumstances under which he is behaving at this time. They are probably better off because awareness of reality, no matter how unpleasant, makes for better programming of one's behavior, but they are also probably more pained. It's sort of a "sadder but wiser" phenomenon. These individuals express considerable enthusiasm for the experience after all is said and done.

However, there are others, black and white, adult and youth, who do not come out with a clearer head and/or more joy. These come out confused, more frightened, and angry about where they are at. These are mostly people who experienced incomplete processes due to some of the problems that arise when black youth interface with sensitivity, coming from where they do. It seems to me that one of the things we have to do is to devise some procedures for getting the black people to where the white people are on the safety issue and for getting the white people to where the black people are on the relating issue <u>before</u> we bring them together.

One possibility is to have them get together in uniracial groups before forming biracial groups. One of the problems that blacks have that can be worked on during the first session is that they quite frequently are off into subgroups of various kinds. There're the militants, there're the dropouts, there're the Toms, there's the middle class black, there's the oreo, etc., and there're the older and younger blacks, and there're the male blacks and the female blacks, and there's the white girl dating male and there's the nondating male, and so on. For instance, one of the most important, constructive and explosive confrontations occurred when a black caucus was held in which they ultimately literally physically battled out the issues and feelings aroused by the black men dating the white women until they came to an accord. They came out of it with their heads on straight and in unison for the first time in many of their experiences. And <u>then</u> were able to interface with us and to teach us some of what <u>they</u> know about relating, and we were able then to communicate something about what we had learned about being affectionate, being vulnerable and real, and this kind of thing.

For the white people's part, their initial session would be designed to get them to the point where they can trust each other and release the affection we feel for our kind, and to become aware of their racist orientation, their power and control orientation, the tremendous <u>value</u> they place on control of <u>all kinds</u>. They also need to be made aware of such unconscious racist feelings as being comfortable in most situations because they are in effect a part of an aristocracy, because they have all the resources and power to keep the blacks and other oppressed groups in their place even if they don't intend to use it personally.

The blacks in the meantime need to have some techniques that are developed specifically for them and administered by black facilitators. I suggest, for instance, that given the fact that they live in a jungle and occupied country environment and that they therefore use a hostile jiving orientation, why not build sensitivity techniques that start with hostile and/or playful putdowns and playful physical combat and competition games. These could then be built from into self-exploration about what was their reaction to all that by means of intensive, probing and often psuedo-hostile comment-eliciting techniques, modelling techniques and structuring techniques. These people are very physical, they're very angry. They <u>have</u> to get the tension out, the tension which is a combination of rage and fear. They are in a constant state of holding back a profound desire to <u>impact</u> on the environment and a terrific fear of the impact of the environment back. They need to get some of that off their chests and out of their bodies before they can be reached, and before they can trust each other, much less the whites. When the blacks play, they wrestle, they throw each other around, they run, they holler, they dance, they fight, they swing from the chandeliers. One of the most profound techniques we have begun using, taking the blacks as our cue, is to do that. When there is tension in the group, there may be a whole group wrestle in which everybody gets into a gigantic play fight. Or there may be individual wrestling in which two individuals who have really been confronting may really go at it in a total push wrestling match and let off all the steam and all the anger while at the same time not destroying each other.

The point is that we have to start designing sensitivity techniques which will take the blacks from where they are on entry and move them to the point where they can interface with us, while we use the techniques that were developed for us to move us to the point where we can interface with each other. After which we would use techniques ranging from lectures to such things as dividing the group into two sections earmarked by armbands of different colors and then permanently moving one of the groups into the territory of the other, which are designed to make them aware of their unconscious racism, power and control orientation and so on.

After these initial sessions, the groups could be coalesced for the serious business of encountering other people of all types. I'm sure that if this type of procedure were used, there would be a lot more direct kinds of things and a lot less indirect kinds of impacts, with more meaningful verbal interchanges between the groups. The blacks are <u>extremely</u> articulate--when they get to the point where they trust us. They know how to use our language beautifully. They are people in an occupied land, in which they are outnumbered nine to one, and they watch us like hawks. They're like children; their job is to survive and watch the people who control. They know us like books. We don't know them at all. One of the things that starts happening when they come out and start talking is that <u>we</u> get to know <u>them</u>. And, as I said before, one of the problems of becoming survival-oriented toward the people in power is that that is <u>all</u> that you learn about the people in power--how they <u>keep</u> in power. You don't learn about the existential commonalities of these powerful people, their shared humanity with you. This is what the blacks--and the women and the young and the old--learn when there is meaningful verbal exchange of where people are at.

Another thing that happens when people are tuned on the same wavelength in sensitivity experiences is extremely meaningful <u>nonverbal</u> interchanges. All involved learn about affection, vulnerability, anger, fear, relief, joy, and other

powerful emotional experiences from this medium. They learn the enormous communication load nonverbal channels carry and the tremendous resource physical action, physical contact and nonverbal communication can be. In addition, the blacks learn how to express and receive affection from all kinds of people without the hustle-hassle of sex and the fear of homosexuality, weakness, vulnerability, ridicule, etc. They learn how to love. For their part, the whites learn to release their taut continuous control over themselves and each other and to let emotions fly and feelings show without worrying about people running amok, and so on.

In short, there are real problems when black youth and sensitivity training come together, but it's worth the effort and hassle. And with some improvements in technology, it could serve as a major tool in the development of understanding, acceptance of self and others, and cooperation between the races.

Question Period

What is the role of the black woman in all this?

She is very ambivalent about this whole thing. She has a lot to lose like the white man has a lot to lose. But she also has a lot to gain. She's beginning to find out that it's possible to have a real, human relationship with her man, that it's possible to respect her man. As a black woman once said, "It's about time we put balls on our black men." This is one of the biggest issues that divide the blacks--the war between the sexes. The black men are just as chauvinistic as are the white males, while at the same time the actual power relationship in the black community is overwhelmingly in the hands of the women. They are in a state of considerable conflict. They want their black men back, which implies a major change in their power position. However, it also implies that the black men change in a manner that would allow them to earn the power and respect, at least from the overriding culture's evaluation of worth in terms of competence at taking control of things, including the self, and engaging in responses like self-denial and forming long-term commitments and responsibilities. And there is a fear that they will not be able to do this on the part of the black women.

The black men, for their part, have a highly ambivalent attitude toward their women. They alternate between being studs and super-sexy in the male sense, being rascally, irresponsible and even coquettish in a masculine sort of way as a sort of Peck's bad boy relationship with her as a harsh mother figure, and being sadistic and super-exploitative and grossly irresponsible. They have a rather attractive life in the realm of their relationship to their women, which can be characterized roughly as having all the goodies and none of the responsibilities. On the other hand, they don't get any respect from their women or from the society as a whole or at a deep level from themselves as they utilize the overriding culture's evaluative standards and those of the black subculture on themselves. They would like to change this, and this is one of the major forces afoot in the whole black scene. They, too, are ambivalent, but they are much less so than are the black women. They have more to gain and less to lose by becoming a "respect-able" male. But it's not a settled issue, either within the black men or between the black men and the black women. And it is an issue that has to be settled before they can turn around and face whitey.